



Top Ten Tips to Get Baby to Sleep

By Judy Arnall

Recommendations: For the first six months of life, baby should sleep on their back, in a crib, in your room. After six months, baby could sleep in their own room, but still on their backs and in a crib. After one year, baby can sleep anywhere, with parents, siblings, on their tummy or back.

Tips to facilitate sleep: Recreate the womb!

1. Shhhhhhhhhhh, white noise, music
2. Dark

3. Warmth
4. Smell
5. Routine – keep the same bedtime routine of gum cleaning, pajamas (sleeper) story, snack (breastfeeding or bottle) and singing or rocking before bed.
6. Sleep Associations – have several for flexibility. Rock, nurse, music, pacifier, swaddling, etc.
7. Sucking – hands or pacifier
8. Movement – car, stroller, on you, rocking and carriers
9. Containment - swaddle but leave hands visible for baby to suck on
10. Leave to sleep when drowsy – watch for signs: quieter, eyes glazed over and losing interest in things, rubbing eyes, becoming fussy or crying, yawning, slumping over, looking to suck with nursing or bottle.

Sleep Cycles

Babies and adults have about five sleep cycles a night. Sleep cycles consist of light sleep and deep sleep. Babies cycles are about 30-60 minutes per cycle and adults are about 90 minutes. After the first light sleep cycle (of 10-15 minutes) babies go into deep sleep. Put baby to bed where they will wake up. Wait until they are in the deep sleep stage to put them down.

Temperament

- High need babies tend to want to be held quite a bit and sleep close to a parent. They do not schedule well in eating, toileting or sleep habits.
- Take care of yourself so you can parent high-need babies with patience and empathy

Baby Still Doesn't Sleep? How to Cope

- Send partner out of the house with baby – then nap.
- Trade sleep times with partner – one person sleeps in the furthest corner of the house while other partner tends to baby.
- Try to catch a few winks while baby is sleeping.
- Ask for help from friend or neighbor to take the baby so you can sleep.

- If you can't nap, get some fresh air, sunshine, water on your face, cold air, exercise and energizing company to get through the day without sleep. Your spirits will be better.

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