

Colic- Parent Handout

What is Colic?

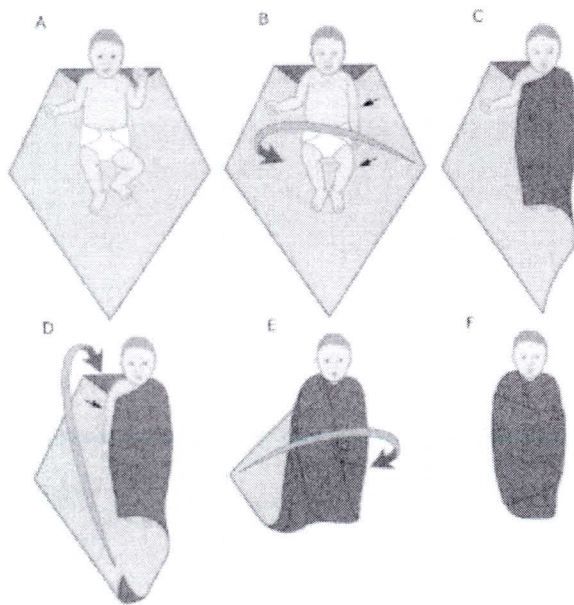
All babies cry, some cry more than others. Colic is when a baby cries for at least 3 hours a day on at least 3 days a week for 3 weeks in a row. Colic usually starts around 2-3 weeks of age and usually goes away by 3 months of age.

What Causes Colic?

There are many theories as to the cause of colic including intestinal pain (gas, constipation), acid reflux, food allergies, and an immature brain/neurological system. However, no one knows for sure what causes colic. We do know that it goes away in 100% of babies.

How Can You Help Soothe Your Baby?

1. First, make sure your baby isn't hungry, has a soiled diaper, or is too cold or hot.
2. Swaddling your baby helps him or her feel more secure.



From: www.newbornhelpline.com

3. Hold your baby in the "colic hold" (stomach or side lying position). This also helps the baby feel more secure and reduces the startle reflex.



4. Make a loud “shushing” noise into your baby’s ear. This recreates the sound of the blood flowing in the placenta when the baby was in the womb.
5. Gently swing or rock your baby. This may be done in your arms, in a swing, while in your arms in a rocker
6. Sucking on a pacifier soothes many babies. If breastfeeding you may want until breastfeeding is well established before introducing the pacifier.

Medications:

- Simethicone (Mylicon) drops have not been proven to be helpful in helping with colic. However, some parents feel they are helpful and they are safe for infants.
- Gripe water or Herbal Tea: There is not very good evidence that these help babies with colic. There are many different versions with different ingredients so it is important to check with your doctor before giving any herbal remedies to your baby.
- Probiotics (lactobacillus): May be helpful for some babies but cannot be used for babies who are immunocompromised. Check with your doctor before giving Probiotics.

Sometimes babies don’t respond to any of these techniques or medications. When this happens it is NOT your fault. Keep trying or take a break and let your baby cry.

Taking Care of Yourself

It is important for you, as caretakers of the baby, to also take care of yourself. It is common to get frustrated and angry at your baby’s crying. When this happens, put your baby in a safe place (his crib, car seat, or with another caretaker) and take a short break. Do what you need to do to help yourself relax so that you can take care of your baby again. Whatever you do, **DO NOT SHAKE** your baby as this can lead to permanent brain damage and death. In addition, schedule time for yourself at least once a day if possible. Hire a babysitter or ask family to watch your baby while you take a walk, take a bath, or exercise. Taking some time for yourself on a regular basis is important for you and for your baby.

Remember: although it doesn’t seem like it now, colic WILL end. If you don’t see an improvement by 4 months of age please call your pediatrician.