



Nursing Tips for Fussy Babies

Babies fuss for many reasons: too hot, too cold, wet or dirty diaper, etc. One or two fussy bouts each day is a normal part of baby behavior. Babies cry to tell you that they need something to be different.

Calming babies is a learned skill. It doesn't happen by instinct. **Nursing and lots of skin-to-skin contact are great ways to calm babies!** You can also try the age old methods: swaddling, shushing, gentle jiggling, sucking and positioning baby on his side or stomach. Ask WIC for information or search the web for *Happiest Baby on the Block* or *WIC's Understanding Baby Behavior*. Some moms worry about their milk supply if baby goes through fussy bouts. Remember...

- Young babies need to eat often. It does NOT mean you are losing your milk. Frequent feeds are normal and comforting for your baby.
- Respond to your baby's early feeding cues (fingers to mouth, lip smacking, rooting for breast, etc.) Crying is a late sign of hunger. If you wait until baby starts crying, latch will be difficult.
- Respond to signs that baby is full. When baby falls off the breast after a good feed, he drank enough milk. In an hour or so, he'll let you know he wants another "refill."
- Giving formula after nursing will cause overfeeding. Overfeeding = stomach aches and lots of spit up. And formula is hard to digest. The result? More fussiness!
- It's OK if the baby does not eat at regular times. When he wants to eat, nurse him.
- Burp your baby after nursing on the first side. Offer the other side. He may or may not take it.
- Once your baby is nursing well and is over a month old, a pacifier can help. Some babies have a very strong need to suck and a pacifier can be comforting.
- Some babies get fussy because of something the mother eats. Milk and dairy products are the most common. If a certain food bothers your baby, avoid it. It may take a week before you see any change. You may be able to try the food again later on.
- Decrease or stop smoking and caffeine as these can cause fussiness.

Mother's Milk: The original comfort food for fussy babies