



TALK LINE
FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

Top 10 Reasons Babies Cry and Ways to Console Them



It's no surprise that all babies cry. Most small babies cry 1 to 3 hours a day. But sometimes it is hard to figure out why a baby is crying, and this can be frustrating.

Why Babies Might Cry and What to Do?

1. **Hunger:** Look for signs of hunger—*i.e.*, moving head to the side (“rooting”), fussing, smacking lips, or putting hands in mouth—before crying starts.
2. **Dirty diaper:** Babies differ on how long they can stand a dirty diaper, but it's easy to check.
3. **Needs sleep:** Sometimes it is hard for babies to fall asleep especially when they are overtired. They may need rocking, movement, or less stimulation.
4. **Wants to be held:** Cuddling is good for you and your baby. You can hold your baby in your arms or try a front carrier.
5. **Needs to burp or has tummy troubles:** Many babies are uncomfortable after they eat, especially if they haven't burped enough. Other stomach problems might be gas, a milk intolerance or allergy, reflux, constipation, or colic.
6. **Too hot or too cold:** As a rule, babies are comfortable when they wear one more layer than you would need.
7. **Teething:** Teething usually begins at 4-7 months. You can feel your baby's gums for teeth pushing up. Give your baby something hard to chew on to ease pain.
8. **Not feeling well:** If your baby is still crying after his/her basic needs are met, you might want to check whether your baby has a fever or seems sick.
9. **Wants less stimulation or wants more stimulation:** When things seem overwhelming for your baby try swaddling. If your baby wants more action, try to take him/her outside the house in a carrier or stroller.
10. **Something is uncomfortable** (scratchy clothing, awkward position)

When Your Baby is Still Crying, Try These Consoling Tactics:

1. **Sucking:** The tip of your finger, a pacifier, or his/her own fingers, thumb, or fist
2. **Motion:** In a stroller, rocking chair, bouncy seat, car, or baby swing
3. **Distraction:** A game of peek a boo, a new toy or book, or a change of scenery
4. **Visual Stimulation:** A place by the window, a fan in motion, or a fish tank
5. **Comfort:** Extra cuddling, swaddling, a massage, or a bath with a parent
6. **Sound:** A vacuum cleaner, running water, humming or saying “shh” soothingly, singing, or a radio turned to static

Thanks to:

www.babycenter.com

and Eugenie Allen “**Why is This Baby Crying?**” from the October 1996 issue of Parenting, pgs 87-92