Tips for Sleepy Parents

New parents can expect to get less sleep. For a few months, most of your sleep will be in short 2-3 hour stretches. These tips will NOT make your baby sleep through the night, but they may help YOU get a few more minutes of sleep.

1. **Keep baby close at night**

Pediatricians recommend you put your baby’s crib in your room for the first few months. When your baby wakes up and needs something, you won’t have far to go. Remember, your baby should sleep alone, on their back, and in a crib with a tight-fitting sheet. Keep toys and blankets out of the crib.

2. **Try some “white noise”**

Play music softly or turn on a quiet fan so you won’t wake up with every little sound your baby makes. You can still hear your baby when he really needs you, but you won’t wake up every time he moves.

3. **Keep the lights low**

Keeping lights low while you feed, burp or change your baby’s diaper during the night will help you get back to sleep quickly.

4. **Sleep when your baby sleeps**

While it may seem impossible, try to sleep when your baby sleeps. Even 90 minutes of sleep can help you feel more rested.

5. **Ask for help**

Taking care of your little one can be hard work. Ask family and friends for help at home.

Adapted from the California WIC Program in collaboration with UC Davis Human Lactation Center as part of the Fit WIC Baby Behavior Study Center
Your Baby’s Sleep:

What to Expect

Young babies are supposed to wake up at night. Night waking is important to keep your baby healthy. Babies must wake to be fed and when they need help to be safe and comfortable.

Baby Sleep Patterns

Some babies need more sleep than others. As your baby gets older, his sleep will change and become more predictable. This is what you can expect:

Newborn to 6 Weeks

Newborn babies sleep about 14 to 16 hours in a 24 hour period. It may not seem like they sleep this much because they only sleep a few hours at a time. This is normal.

During the first 6 weeks, your baby’s sleep will be unpredictable. He’s still getting used to the new world around him, and may mix up his days and nights.

Babies may have times when they wake up more often due to growth spurts, sickness, change in routine, or learning a new skill such as rolling over or crawling.

6 to 8 Weeks

Your baby may sleep more at night because he is awake more during the day. Waking at night is normal and healthy.

About 3 Months

Your baby’s longest stretch of sleep is at night and he will wake up less often.

About 6 Months

Your baby is able to sleep up to a 6 hour stretch at one time.

2 Ways Babies Sleep

Your baby needs to go through periods of both light and deep sleep. Both types of sleep are important for your baby’s health.

Light Sleep

Babies need light sleep for their brains to grow and develop. Babies dream during light sleep. Dreaming is healthy for them.

During Light Sleep Babies:
- Move around and make noises
- Have eye twitches or open and close their eyes quickly
- Have fast and slow breathing
- Dream
- Wake up easily

Deep Sleep

Babies need deep sleep for their brains to rest.

During Deep Sleep Babies:
- Don’t move very much
- Have relaxed and floppy arms and legs
- Have regular steady breathing
- Make sucking movements
- Don’t wake up easily

Newborns fall asleep dreaming in light sleep. Some newborns wake up easily if you lay them down while in light sleep. Wait for signs of deep sleep before laying your baby down.