Sleep in Newborns (0-2 Months)

Babies are active sleepers. Expect to see your baby smile, grimace, suck, snuffle and move while sleeping. Newborns sleep between 10 and 19 hours a day (average is 13 to 14 ½ hours). They do not have a regular sleep pattern. They may sleep more during the day than at night. Many babies sleep on a more regular schedule by the time they are 4 months old.

Safest Ways for Baby to Sleep

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that a baby sleep in the same room as the caregiver until 1 year of age. Room sharing is encouraged **but not** bed sharing.
- Place your baby to sleep on their back.
- Use a firm mattress with a well-fitting sheet in a safety-approved crib. Slats should be no more than 2 ⅜ inches apart.
- Blankets, soft toys, bumper pads and pillows are not recommended in the crib. Consider using a sleep sack instead of a blanket. Make sure you place your baby with their feet at the bottom of the crib. The blanket should be no higher than chest-level. Blankets should be tucked in around the mattress.
- Create a smoke-free zone around your baby.
- Keep your baby's bedroom at a temperature that is comfortable for an average adult.
- Your baby should never sleep on any furniture that is not designed for sleeping.

Teach Good Sleep Habits

- At 2 to 3 months, start thinking about a bedtime routine. Infants with bedtime routines sleep better and longer at night.
- Keep lights dim at night. Walk in the morning sunlight if you are able. Save play for daytime.
- Learn your baby's signs of being sleepy. They may include fussiness, crying, rubbing of eyes, and staring off into space. Try to put your baby down to sleep when you see those signs.
- Choose a soothing activity such as bathing, rocking, or cuddling. Many newborns need to be rocked or fed to sleep for the first few months.
- Sleep when your baby sleeps. Parents need sleep too. Try to nap when your baby naps. Ask family or friends to help so you can rest.
- Watch videos about safe sleep. https://www.cdc.gov/reproductive-health/features/babies-sleep.html

When to Call

- If you are worried. Babies who are very fussy or hard to settle may have a medical problem like colic or reflux.
- If your baby ever seems to have problems breathing while asleep.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 4/2026 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7299.