

Hush, Little Baby...

How to calm a crying baby and what you need to know about Shaken Baby Syndrome

Taking care of a young child can be overwhelming at times. When your baby is happy, you are happy. But babies aren't all smiles and giggles. In fact, you may find that your baby cries a lot. You may even find that there are times when you can't comfort your baby, no matter what you try. Excessive crying, or colic, makes it hard to console your baby resulting in feelings of anger, tension or stress. While it's okay to have feelings of frustration, it's never okay to shake a baby!



How to care for a crying baby:

- Check to see if your baby's diaper needs changing.
- Try offering the baby something to eat or drink.
- Try gently burping or rubbing your baby's back.
- Take the baby's temperature and try changing his or her clothes or coverings if the baby is feverish.
- Try lowering the lights and noise.
- Try gently rocking or give your baby a bottle or a pacifier.
- You cannot spoil your baby by responding to cries right away. Holding your child close and talking gently can make your baby feel loved and secure.



Shaking a baby can cause:

- Blindness
- Loss of hearing
- Internal bleeding
- Paralysis
- Lasting brain damage
- Death

Sometimes efforts to calm or quiet a fussy baby can become extreme, without the parents even realizing it. Following these tips will help both you and your baby feel better, while preventing Abusive Head Trauma.

What is Abusive Head Trauma?

You may have heard of **Shaken Baby Syndrome**, which is a common term for Abusive Head Trauma.

Abusive Head Trauma is the general medical term for injuries or death caused by shaking young children. Infants under the age of 2 years are at the most risk for suffering the effects of Abusive Head Trauma.

Shaking a baby is harmful because young children have:



- Weak neck muscles
- Heavy heads
- Growing brains
- Thin skulls

Preventing Abusive Head Trauma:



- NEVER shake a baby, even while playing.
- Do not hold your baby during an argument.
- If you find yourself becoming annoyed or angry with your baby, put him or her in the crib and leave the room. Try to calm down, then call someone for support.
- Call a friend or relative to come and stay with your child if you feel out of control.
- Seek the help of a counselor or attend parenting classes.
- Do not ignore the signs if you suspect child abuse in your home or in the home of someone you know.
- If you need someone to talk to or more information, call KIDLINE at 1-800-CHILDREN.

 Kidline

1-800-CHILDREN
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Parenting is hard. We can help.



Prevent Child Abuse
Louisiana