

Caring for... your infant (0-1 years)

Caring for children is challenging and it's hard to know what is and isn't normal behaviour.

Below are some normal infant behaviours, with tips on how to manage them.

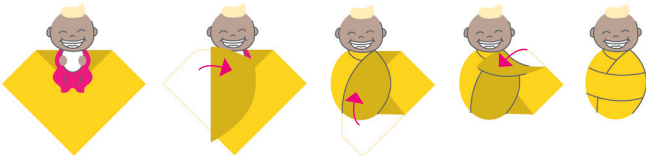
1

Crying and fussing

Babies cry and fuss to communicate their needs – hunger, tiredness, feeling uncomfortable. They need to be held and cuddled to feel safe and secure.

Try:

- See if your baby's nappy needs to be changed
- Offer breast milk or a bottle to see if they are hungry
- Pick them up and give them a cuddle
- Wrap them in a swaddle



- Using a belly hold, to help them pass wind



- Taking a walk outside, or a car ride around the block
- Use a pacifier/dummy
- Wearing your baby in a sling or carrier
- Gentle rocking/swinging and walking to calm down your baby

2

Baby won't stop crying, no matter what you do

Try:

- Turning on children's music with singing or ocean/water sounds
- Place baby safely in a crib and walk away for a few minutes
- Getting a glass of water, walking around, taking deep slow breaths and exhaling slowly – this helps your nervous system stay calm
- Asking for help from a partner, family member or a friend

If your baby does not stop crying, no matter what you do, call your GP or health professional.
For free 24 hour health advice, call healthdirect on 1800 022 222.

3

Putting everything into mouth

This is common, as babies are learning hand-mouth co-ordination or are teething and need a safe object to chew on.

Try:

- Giving a safe teething toy or distracting your baby with a different toy
- Put a damp washcloth into the freezer for your baby to chew on
- Remove small objects from your baby's reach, to prevent choking

4

Baby doesn't sleep through the night

This is very normal behaviour. While some babies start sleeping through the night at around 4 months of age, most do not. Babies have to eat frequently, as they double their birth weight by around 4-6 months of age and triple their weight by the age of one.

Try:

- Sleeping when your baby sleeps
- Taking turns feeding your baby with your partner or family member
- Placing your baby safely in a crib and leaving the room to take a short break – take deep breaths
- Feeding and soothing your baby

Remember

- Babies need to be held and cuddled. You are not spoiling your baby, by holding them.
- Denying your baby food, touch, or attention is harmful to their development.
- **SHAKING, HITTING OR TOSSING** your baby is harmful
 - » **NEVER** shake a baby
 - » **NEVER** hit/squeeze/pinch a baby
 - » **NEVER** yell at a baby

For more information or advice, visit reputable parenting websites such as:

- **Kids Health**
kidshealth.schn.health.nsw.gov.au
- **Tresillian**
tresillian.org.au
- **Karitane**
karitane.com.au
- **Raising Children**
raisingchildren.net.au
- **Triple P**
triplep-parenting.net.au
- **Family Connect and Support**
familyconnectsupport.dcj.nsw.gov.au
- **Parent Line**
parentline.org.au (NSW) or
free call 1300 1300 52

Don't let frustrations escalate – reach out for help when you need it.