



Q: What is the best position for my baby when they are sleeping?

A: Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, your baby should sleep on their back, on a firm mattress in an empty crib. Do not put any toys, pillows, bumpers or quilts in the crib while the baby is sleeping. A sleep sack is recommended instead of using a loose blanket in the crib.^{3,4} For more information, ask your doctor or visit the "Parents Resources" listed below.

Parent Resources:

Pathways.org

- Provides activity suggestions based on your baby's age

Stanfordchildrens.org

- Search "newborn sleep patterns" in the search box for information on your baby's sleep

References:

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The Importance of Sleep and Play

Understanding your baby's signs and signals for sleep and play



As an adult, it's easy to understand when you need sleep and when you want to be active. It's much harder for your baby to recognize this. It can also be hard for you to tell when your baby needs sleep or when they need to play. When your baby was in the hospital, the nurses, therapists and doctors decided their sleep time and awake time. Now that your baby is at home, it's important for you to know when they need to sleep and when they need to play. This pamphlet is meant to be a guide for reading your baby's signs and signals for sleep and play.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Why is sleep so important for my baby?

A: Sleep is required for healthy growth and development. During sleep, your baby's body and brain develop, grow and repair. Without enough sleep, your baby's physical, emotional and behavioral health may suffer.¹

Q: Why is play so important for my baby?

A: When your baby is active, they are building muscles and learning to move their bodies voluntarily. Activity and play during this young age helps your baby develop movement skills they will use as they learn to crawl, walk, throw, dance and anything else they attempt to do!²

Q: How much should my baby sleep?

A: This depends on the age of your baby. Newborn babies can sleep up to 16 hours in a day, but this decreases, as the baby gets older.³ Understanding your baby's signs of sleepiness will help you decide if they are well-rested or if they need more sleep. Common signs of sleepiness include rubbing their eyes, crying or fussing, yawning and looking away.³



Q: How long should I be playing with my baby?

A: You should be playing with your baby or giving them safe, age-appropriate toys whenever they are awake and not feeding. When your baby is playing, they are learning and developing their brain, so play is good for a baby!^{2,2}

Q: How will I know when my baby has had enough playtime?

A: When your baby begins to show signs of sleepiness that means they are done with playing and should take a nap. Each baby will have different signs but some common ones are when a baby rubs their eyes, yawns, begins to fuss or looks away and stops being interested.³



Q: What kinds of things should I do with my baby during playtime?

A: The activities and toys used by your baby during playtime will depend on your baby's age and interests. Each baby is different and that means each baby will like different types of activity. For suggestions based on your baby's age, visit the "Parent Resources" websites provided on the next page.