

There are some things that may help, but remember that every baby is different. A combination of a number of things might help.

Avoid leaving your baby to cry for a long period of time. Soon after crying begins check if baby is wet, hungry or needs to be burped or just needs comforting.

It is OK to hold and comfort baby.

Never underestimate the effect a constantly crying baby has on you as a parent. When you have had yet another sleepless and stressful night you can end up feeling overtired, depressed and uptight.

Accept help when it is offered and ask for it when you need it. Plan to have time away from your baby to do something for yourself.



For personal advice on feeding baby, talk to your child health nurse. General information on baby feeding is available on www.heinzforbaby.com.au

For information on HEINZ* Baby Foods call the HEINZ Baby Product Info-line 1800 633 333

This information has been written and produced by the HEINZ Infant Feeding Advisory Service for H.J. Heinz Company Australia Limited. Locked Bag 19057, Southbank Vic 3006, Australia.



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What parents need to know about the Unsettled Baby

Why is my baby crying?

It can be very stressful when your baby won't stop crying. Even healthy, well fed babies can cry for what seems like for ever and even though it is extremely upsetting for you and your baby, it is not serious to your baby's health.

Remember, it is not your fault or your baby's fault that this is happening and it will eventually stop – in most cases when your baby reaches about three months of age.

Crying and babies

Crying is a normal behaviour in babies, particularly in the first few weeks of life and it is one of the ways your baby communicates with you.

Newborn babies may cry for about 1½ hours a day.

All babies are different and by the age of 6 weeks even perfectly healthy and normal babies may cry for up to 3 hours a day.

As babies get older, usually after 6 weeks, they learn other ways of communicating and generally the amount of crying will slowly become less.

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What makes an unsettled baby cry more than normal?

Babies can become very unsettled anytime in the first 3 months of life, with the unsettled behaviour often starting in the first 2 weeks.

Babies usually appear healthy and normal but have severe crying attacks, often in the early evening.

Other signs of an unsettled baby may include:

- sudden onset of grumpiness
- high pitched screaming
- tummy rumbles
- drawing up of the legs to the stomach and arching the back
- flushing of the face
- stomach pain which may be helped by passing wind or a stool.

The exact causes for a baby being unsettled are unknown.

Comforting techniques

You may like to:

- rock your baby in a pram or cradle
- lie your baby over your knee and slowly rock your knees back and forth
- turn on a low volume radio
- wrap baby in a light blanket firmly to prevent body movements from waking baby
- use a dummy as some babies comfort themselves by sucking – but check with your child health nurse first
- massage baby gently with baby oil
- carry baby with you using a baby sling
- give your baby a warm soothing bath
- take baby for a walk in the pram.

It is OK to pick up your crying baby to give comfort. You won't spoil your baby by doing this.

The fact that your baby is unsettled is not your fault and it will stop. If you find there are times when you can't cope, put your baby down safely, walk away and close the door. Call someone and talk through your feelings.

Feeding and the unsettled baby

An unsettled baby may be breast or bottle fed. If you are breast feeding continue to do so. Some foods that a breast feeding mother may eat are thought to cause the baby to have wind, but don't change your diet without first discussing this possibility with your child health nurse or dietitian.

Changing baby's formula is not proven to be helpful in the management of an unsettled baby and may even make the situation more stressful when there is no change in the baby's crying patterns.

Avoid overfeeding your baby as this could make the situation worse.

Early introduction to solids before 6 months will not stop your baby crying or make your baby sleep through the night.

Avoid herbal remedies as they can often make the situation worse.

Try to establish a regular routine of feeding, playing and sleeping.

Get to know your baby's different crying sounds so that you are able to respond in the right way.

Coping with an unsettled baby

Always check with your child health nurse or family doctor to rule out other reasons for excessive crying.

Keep a daily record of the frequency and duration of the crying episodes, as well as baby's sleeping and feeding patterns and other things such as bowel movements or tummy rumbles etc. Record information on what you did to try to comfort baby. Show your diary to your child health nurse or doctor so that they can advise you as to what might work best for you and your baby.