Getting to know your

BABY

BIRTH to 6 MONTHS

California BABY BEHAVIOR Campaign

About Your Baby

Baby's Name

Birth Date

Time

Place of Birth

Weight

Length

Eye and Hair Color

Place your baby's picture here. (2.5″ x 3.5″ Wallet)

Personal Notes:

California

BABY BEHAVIOR

Campaign

Having a baby is a very exciting time! Learning about baby behavior can help you understand your baby's needs. This booklet answers questions or concerns you may have about sleep, cues and crying.

SLEEP

Night time waking can be hard. Babies sleep differently than adults.

Learn how babies sleep.

page **3**

CUES

Do you find it hard to know what your baby needs?

Learn how your baby communicates with you.

page **9**

CRYING

Babies cry for many reasons, not just because they are hungry.

Learn other reasons babies cry and how you can calm your crying baby.

page **15**

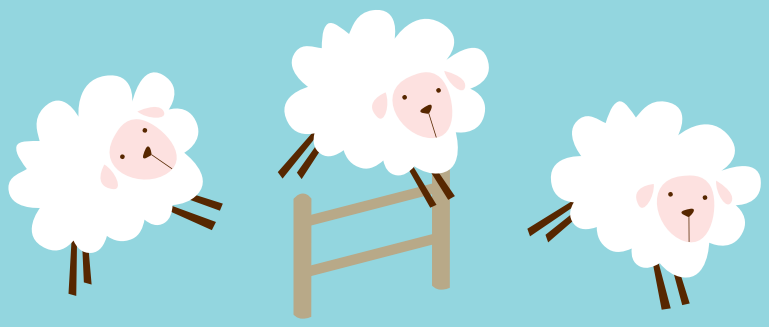
Your newborn baby will wake up frequently. Her stomach is so small that she needs to eat often.

Healthy

SLEEP

for BABY

Night time waking can be hard for new parents. Knowing what to expect will help you feel more relaxed and confident.



Your Baby's Sleep:

WHAT TO EXPECT

Babies are supposed to wake up at night. Waking up at night is important to keep your baby healthy. Babies need to wake up to be fed, to be comfortable and to be safe. Doctors recommend that babies should be put on their backs to sleep.

Baby Sleep Patterns

Some babies need more sleep than others. As your baby gets older, his sleep will change and become more predictable. This is what you can expect:

Newborn to 6 Weeks

During the first 6 weeks, your baby's sleep will be unpredictable. He is still getting used to the new world around him.

Newborn babies sleep for only a few hours at a time and they will wake up many times throughout the day and night. This is normal and healthy for them.

6 to 8 Weeks

Your baby may sleep more at night because he is awake more during the day. Waking up at night is still normal and healthy.

About 3 Months

At night, your baby will sleep for longer periods of time, and wake up less often.

About 6 Months

Your baby may sleep up to 6 hours at a time.

Babies may have times when they wake up more often due to growth spurts, sickness, or changes in routine.

2 Ways Babies Sleep

Your baby needs to go through periods of both light and deep sleep. Both types of sleep are important for your baby's health.

LIGHT SLEEP

Babies need light sleep for their brains to grow and develop. Babies dream during light sleep. Dreaming is healthy for them.

During Light Sleep Babies:

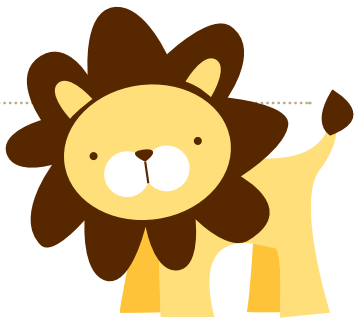
- Move around and make noises
- Have eye twitches or open and close their eyes quickly
- Have fast and slow breathing
- Dream
- Wake up easily

DEEP SLEEP

Babies need deep sleep for their brains to rest.

During Deep Sleep Babies:

- Don't move very much
- Have relaxed and floppy arms and legs
- Have regular steady breathing
- Make sucking movements
- Don't wake up easily



Newborn babies fall asleep in light sleep. Some may wake up easily if you lay them down while in light sleep. Wait for signs of deep sleep before laying your baby down.

Tips for Sleepy Parents

New parents can expect to get less sleep. For a few months, most of your sleep will be in short 2-3 hour stretches. These tips will **NOT** make your baby sleep through the night, but they may help **YOU** get a few more minutes of sleep. Waking up at night is important for your baby's health.

1

Keep baby close at night

Doctors recommend you put your baby's crib or bassinet in the same room for the first few months. When your baby wakes up and needs something, you won't have far to go.

2

Keep the lights low

Keeping lights low while you feed, burp or change your baby's diaper during the night will help you get back to sleep more quickly. You do NOT want low lighting if you are doing something that requires your full attention, such as giving medicine.

3

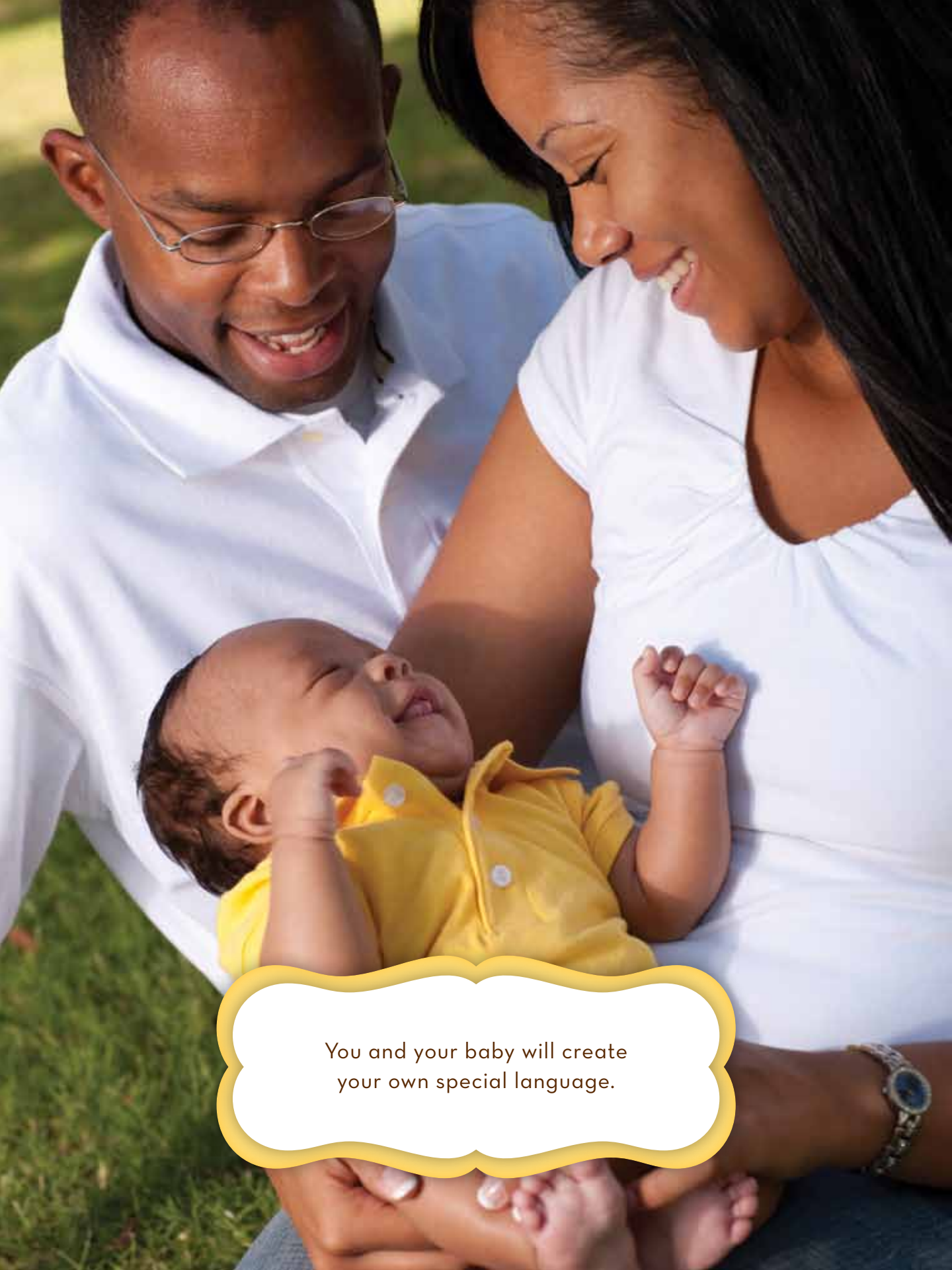
Sleep when your baby sleeps

While it may seem impossible, try to sleep when your baby sleeps. Even 90 minutes of sleep can help you feel more rested.

4

Ask for help

Taking care of your little one can be hard work. Ask family and friends for help at home.



You and your baby will create your own special language.

Baby

CUES

Babies use their bodies and make noises to let their parents know when they need to eat, learn, play or rest. These are called cues.

UNDERSTANDING

Your Baby's Cues

1. Babies are born with the ability to communicate. They use cues to show parents what they need.

2. Newborn babies are still learning to control their bodies. Sometimes their cues are hard to understand. Watching your baby will help you learn what she needs.

3. With practice, your baby will get better at giving cues and you will get better at responding to them.

4. By responding quickly to your baby's cues, you will learn to communicate with each other. She will develop confidence that her world is safe and secure.

When Your Baby Is Hungry

Newborn babies have to be fed often because their stomachs are very small. Compared to older babies, newborn babies are more likely to be hungry when they cry. Watching and responding to hunger cues can help prevent some crying.

HUNGER CUES

When your baby is hungry he may:

- Keep his hands near his mouth
- Bend his arms and legs
- Make sucking noises
- Pucker his lips
- Search for the nipple (root)

FULLNESS CUES

When your baby is full he may:

- Suck slower or stop sucking
- Relax his hands and arms
- Turn away from the nipple
- Push away
- Fall asleep

I Want to Be Near You

As your newborn baby gets older, it will be easier to tell when he is ready to interact, learn or play.

He might:

- Have a relaxed face and body
- Follow your voice and face
- Reach toward you
- Stare at your face
- Raise his head

I Need Something to Be Different

Learning is hard work for babies and they can get tired quickly. Your baby will show you signs that he needs something to be different.

He might:

- Look away, turn away, or arch his back
- Frown or have a glazed look in his eyes
- Stiffen his hands, arms or legs
- Yawn or fall asleep

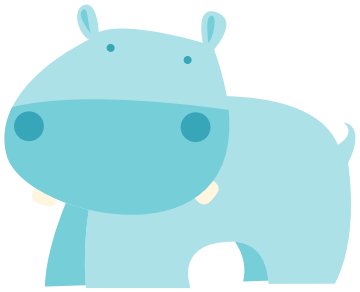
Responding to cues quickly, before your baby starts to fuss, may help your baby cry less.

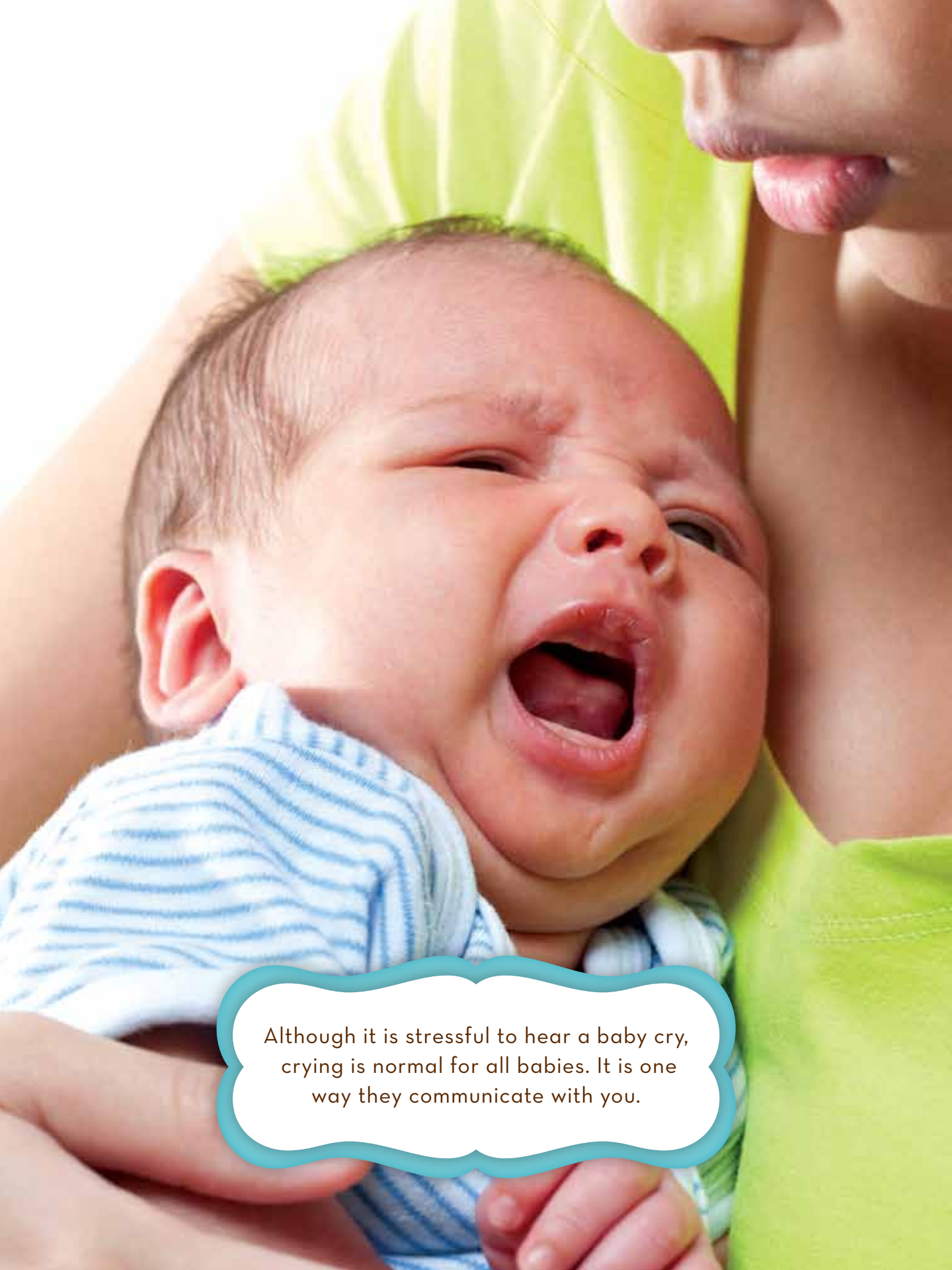
What Should I Do If My Baby Needs Something to Be Different?

When your baby gives you cues that she is overwhelmed, give her a break from the world around her:

- Turn her away or stop the activity and hold her close to your body.
- Change the environment. People or noises can be very tiring for babies. Move her away from the noise and wait until she is ready to interact again.
- Lay her down for a nap if she is tired. Quiet time is good for both of you!
- Teach siblings about baby cues. Show them how baby lets them know when she needs a break.

Newborn babies may also be sensitive to what's going on inside their bodies. Some babies may be fussy right after feeding. Be patient, they may need to burp, pass gas or poop.





Although it is stressful to hear a baby cry, crying is normal for all babies. It is one way they communicate with you.

CRYING

Babies cry for many reasons,

not just because they are hungry.

Baby TEARS

Crying can be very stressful for new parents, but **crying is normal**. It is an important way that babies communicate their needs. As your baby gets older, she will get better at letting you know what she needs. As you get better at understanding and responding to what your baby needs, she will cry less.

By crying, your baby may be telling you...

I need something to be different
I would like some quiet time
I need my diaper changed
I need to be close to you
I am too hot or too cold
I need to be burped
I might be sick
I am hungry
I am afraid
I am tired

Steps to Calm Your Crying Baby

Babies use crying as a way to communicate many different things. They use crying to tell you that they need your help. When your baby is crying:

1 Try to Figure Out the Reason for Crying

For example, is she:

- In need of a diaper change?
- Too hot or too cold?
- Overwhelmed?
- Tired?
- Hungry?
- Uncomfortable?

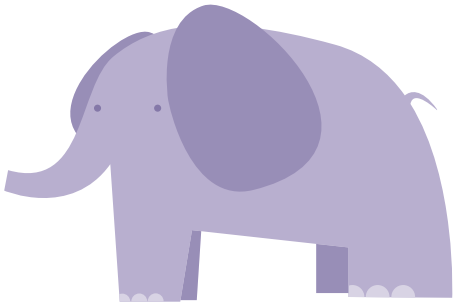
There may be times when you've checked everything and your baby still cries. When this happens:

2 Hold Your Baby Close to You

3 Repeat the Same Action Over and Over

You might try **one** of the following:

- Speaking or singing softly
- Gently rocking, swaying **or** bouncing your baby
- Gently massaging her back, arms, and legs

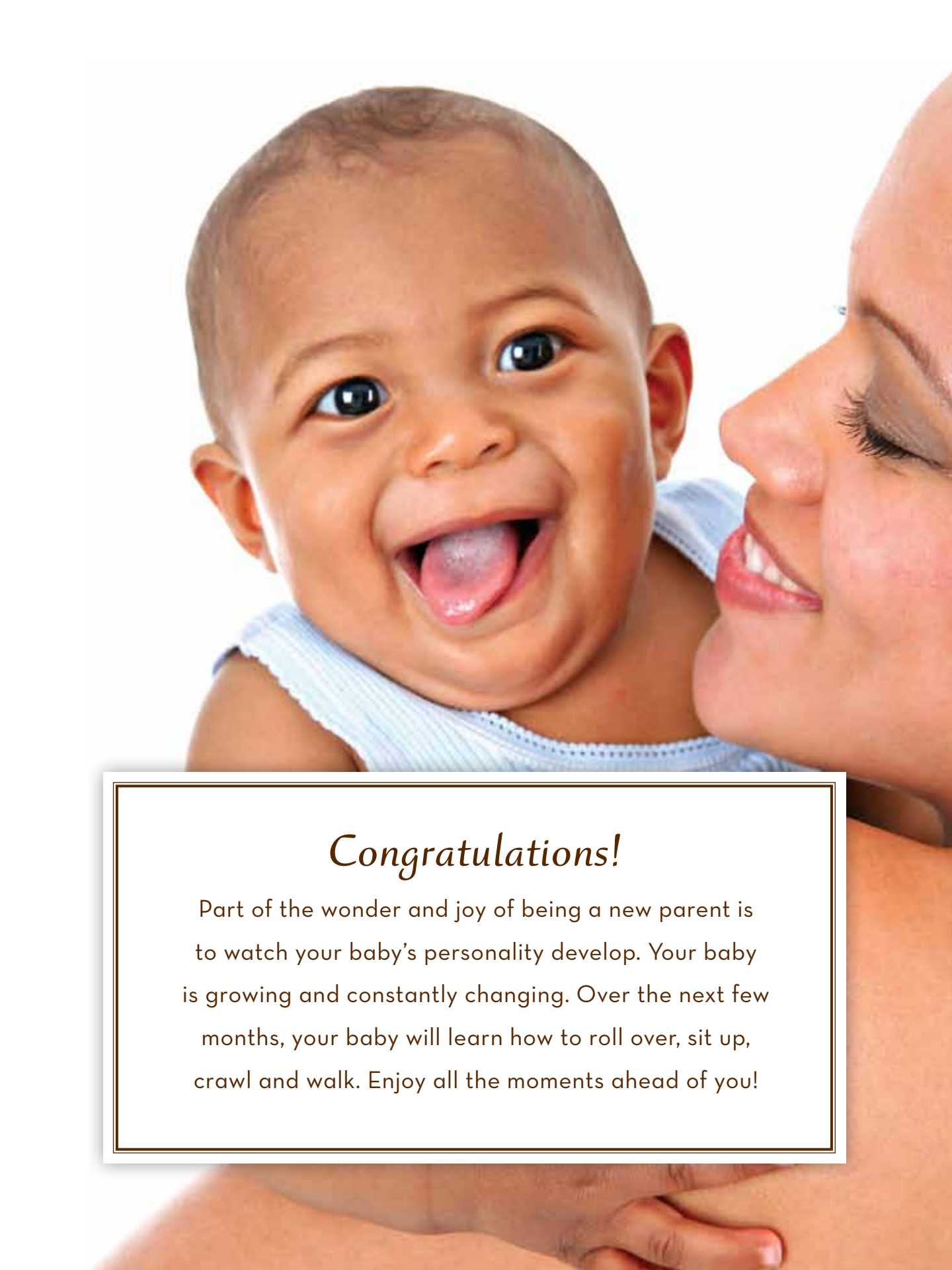


Calming your baby takes time. Sticking with the same action for several minutes before trying something different can be the secret to success. Be patient. If your baby continues to cry or becomes more upset, try one of the other suggestions listed above.

Tips for Coping with Your Crying Baby

It may take a while for your baby to calm down when she is crying. This can be very frustrating for parents.

- Ask a friend or family member to give you a break by helping with your baby.
- If you start to feel angry or overwhelmed, lay your baby down in a safe place for a few minutes and take a break.
- Remember, babies cry less and less as they get older.
- Contact WIC or your doctor if you think your baby is crying too much.

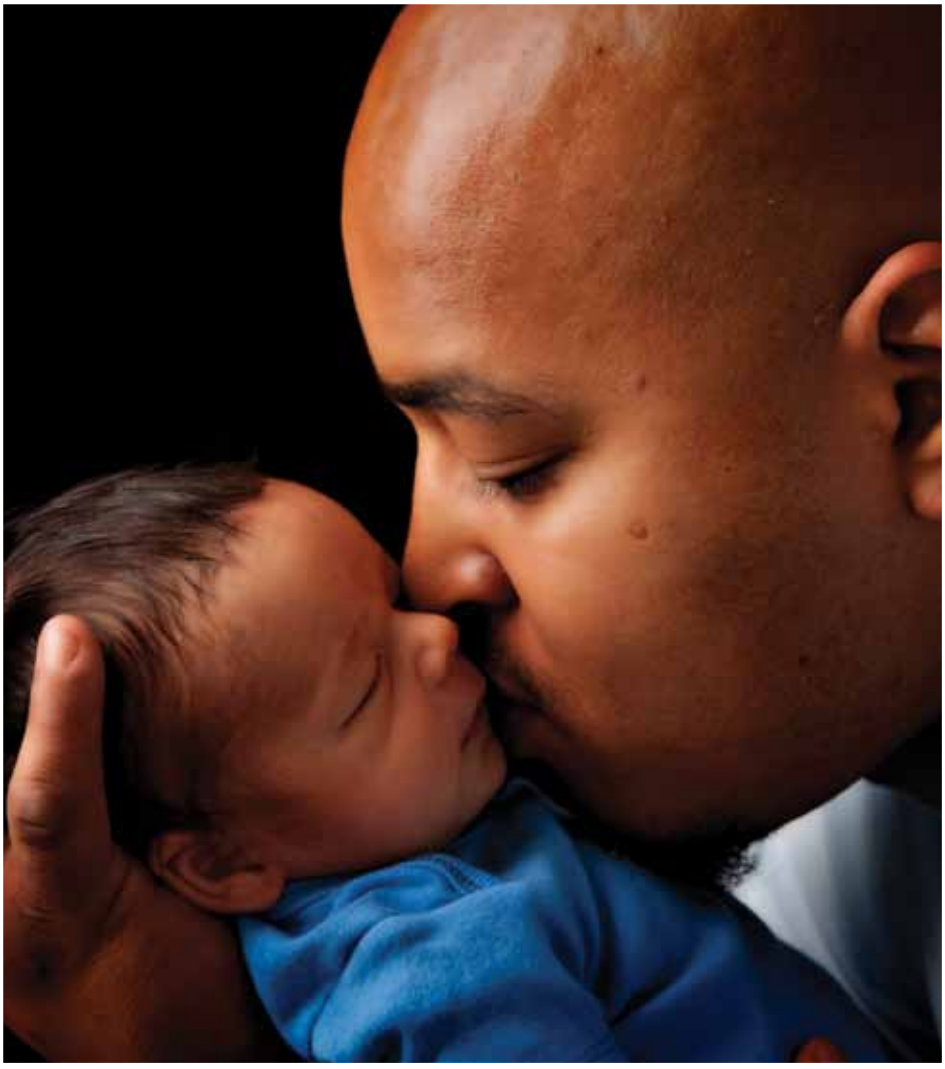


Congratulations!

Part of the wonder and joy of being a new parent is to watch your baby's personality develop. Your baby is growing and constantly changing. Over the next few months, your baby will learn how to roll over, sit up, crawl and walk. Enjoy all the moments ahead of you!

Getting to Know Your Baby DVD

The DVD provided with this booklet includes clips of adorable babies and baby behavior to share with family and friends.



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