

Tips for better sleep

BIRTH TO 6-MOS.

1

FREQUENT WAKING AND FREQUENT SLEEP ARE NORMAL

Sleep develops as the brain develops. In the early months, infants can only tolerate being awake for limited amounts of time. They also need frequent feeds and help returning to sleep. Both awake and asleep sessions will lengthen over the first year.

2

SELF-SOOTHING ABILITIES AT THIS AGE ARE LIMITED

Self-soothing requires a variety of skills: diverting attention, motor ability (to get hand to mouth, etc.), etc. Small infants don't have access to many of these skills, so their toolbox for soothing themselves when distressed are very, very small. Until they get those skills, they need help with regulation.

3

THE MYTH OF "BAD HABITS"

The notion that if you help your baby with sleeping or calming down now, they will never learn on their own is false and not based in research. Skills develop over time. For now, it's okay to help your baby until they are better able to manage distress and sleep/wake cycles (6 months and up).

4

SLEEP TRAINING NOW CAN ACTUALLY BE HARDER

Trying to sleep train during the 4-month regression can actually result in more crying with less progress because of the huge jump in brain and body development that happens now.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Back to sleep, tummy to play.** Give lots of tummy time.
- **Divide and conquer.** See if your partner can take a shift of nightwaking. Adults need at least four hours of unbroken sleep to function.
- **Get naps in any way that works** about every 60- or 90-minutes. (These might be short. That's okay.)
- **"Practice" coaching the rest of the way to sleep.** It's okay to test the waters and see if your baby can handle settling the rest of the way to sleep. No pressure though. If it doesn't work, that's okay.



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