

Sleep Routines: **Lullaby and Goodnight**



If you are the parent of a baby and your fondest wish is for a single night of uninterrupted sleep, you are not alone. Sleep issues are the most common concern that parents of young children bring to their pediatrician.

All children move through deep and light sleep cycles during the night. During these cycles, babies may briefly come to the surface without fully coming awake, others waken. Children under two often wake up several times during the night. Many children return

to sleep quickly on their own without their parents ever knowing they had been awake. Other children need to learn to go back to sleep on their own. Below are some tips to help babies settle to sleep.



Notice when your baby gets sleepy and put your baby to bed during this time. Avoid trying to keep baby up longer to play or for family activities; babies will often get a “second wind” and have more difficulty settling down to sleep.

Early on, put your baby in bed when sleepy, but awake so he can learn early on to get himself to sleep.

Pat or rub your baby to help soothe her the rest of the way to sleep.

Swaddling newborns and young babies in a blanket often helps them sleep.

Sucking helps soothe babies. Help your baby find his fist or use a pacifier.

Rhythmic swinging in your arms or in a baby swing can be soothing and help some babies settle to sleep. Napping in the baby swing is perfectly OK.

Shushing (sh, sh, sh) sounds, soft music, or a noise machine can help some babies settle to sleep.

Establish a bedtime routine that is predictable – bath, getting into pajamas, having a quiet bedtime story, getting a hug and a kiss – all will help your baby feel a sense of security and well-being.

Provide a “lovey,” a soft doll, stuffed animal, or blanket to cuddle.

From the beginning, help baby understand that **nighttime feedings are for eating**. Daytime is for playing. Keep lights low and interaction quiet and soothing.

During the middle of the night, **give your baby a chance to settle herself back to sleep**. She may not need your help, or she may need patting, shushing, or sucking.



American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

- Babies sleep on their backs.
- Never put bottles in bed with your baby.

Visit www.aap.org for more information.

Helpful Books

[The Happiest Baby on the Block](#), Harvey Karp, M.D.

[Sleepless in America](#), Mary Kurcinka

[The No Cry Sleep Solution](#), Elizabeth Pantley

[The Baby Book](#), William Sears, M.D.