

NEWBORN Sleep Guide



“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”



Congratulations!

Both for the arrival of your new little one, and for the wise decision to take action and education yourself on the sleep needs of your newborn. Many of the parents I work with wish they had known then what they know now, they would have done many things differently. You are well on your way to having a super star sleeper in no time!

Newborn Sleep Guide Expectations

This guide is designed to provide education on newborn sleep, and provide tools to foster healthy sleep habits, while building a solid foundation for independent sleep skills. While it is possible for newborns to sleep through the night by 4 months of age, some newborns are not developmentally ready for longer periods of sleep and may take longer. This is all in the realm of normal. This is a Healthy Sleep Plan, not a Sleep Training Plan.



A bit About Newborn Sleep

Let's learn a little about newborn's sleep before we get into the Newborn Guide further. Babies are born with an immature circadian rhythm. It takes 2-4 months (8-16 weeks) to develop. During this development time days and nights can be mixed up, naps may be unpredictable, along with waking every 2 to 3 hours to eat around the 24 hour clock.

Frequent daytime feeds and light exposure help adjust their circadian rhythms. Exposure to daylight is the best thing to help set the circadian rhythm. Each day should start off with the first feed in bright light.

Newborns spend half of their time in deep sleep and the other 50% is in REM sleep. REM, or Rapid Eye Movement, is a very active stage of sleep. This can be why they have periods of sleeping really well, and periods of very noisy sleep while in the REM stage. It is normal for newborns to grunt and make all kinds of noise while sleeping, so try not to disturb them if this is the case. Their sleep cycles are about 30-60 minutes long.

Newborns sleep about 14-20 hours a day. In the first two weeks, they should be eating, changing diapers, and right back to sleep. It is normal for newborns to be very sleepy.

After the 2 weeks their waketime window is usually 45 min - keep an eye on the clock, as some don't show sleep cues. This means that they should be back to sleep 45 minutes from the time they woke. I advise starting to get them back to sleep after 30-35 minutes, so they can be back to sleep at the 45-minute mark.

For newborns, night sleep usually develops before day sleep, which is quite normal, it's what their body needs most. It is normal to have night waking's! The rule of thumb is to feed them when they wake, especially in the first few weeks.

Please be aware that some babies will not develop consistent or predictable daytime sleep until 3-6 months. It all depends on how the body clock develops, how the baby is developing, how the feeds are going, and how the baby is growing.

AAP Safe Sleep Guidelines

Back To Sleep

Babies should always be placed on their back to sleep

Share a Room

Room sharing is a protective factor vs. a risk factor. Babies should share a bedroom with parents, not the same sleeping surface, preferably until baby turns 1, at least the first 6 months. Baby should never sleep on couches or armchairs.

Sleep Space

The crib should be located well away from curtains, dangling cords, or window blind cords. No crib tents.

Firm Sleep Surface

Baby should always sleep on firm sleep surface such as a crib, play yard or bassinet (that meets the safety standards of the CPSC), with a tight fitting sheet..

Nothing should be under the sheet or mattress, such as positioners or wedges. The mattress should not be elevated.

Swaddle

Swaddles are advised to 8 weeks of age as long as baby is on their back and it does not overheat baby. When an infant exhibits signs of attempting to roll, swaddling must stop.

Smoking

The CDC Warns that smoke has been linked to an increased risk of SIDS. Do not smoke around baby, and be sure to wash hands and change clothes before handling a baby.

Other Sleep Spaces

Baby should not sleep unsupervised in car seats, strollers, swings or infant carries. Babies under 4 months are most at risk for positional asphyxiation. Do not place car seat in the crib.

Avoid Overheating

Don't let baby get too hot during sleep. At most, a baby should wear only one layer more of clothing than an adult would wear to be comfortable.

Rolling

Baby must be able to roll both directions before it's okay to allow them to remain in the sleep position he assumes.

Your baby's sleep environment can affect his/her risk for **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)** and other sleep-related causes of infant death, such as suffocation.

Reduce the risk of SIDS and other sleep-related causes of infant death by creating a **safe sleep environment** for your baby.

Please check the AAP Website for the most up to date Dafe Sleep recommendations



Pacifier

The pacifier is a protective factor vs. risk factor. Consider offering a pacifier at naptime and bedtime, after 1 month of age, and breastfeeding is well established. No pacifier clips or strings to avoid suffocation or strangulation. The pacifier does not need to be replaced if it falls out.

Bare Crib

Baby's sleep space should be completely empty aside from a fitted sheet and firm mattress. No loose bedding, stuffed animals, soft objects, or bumpers (even mesh) in the crib.

- 1 Blanket - 12 months and up
- 1 pillow - 18 months and up
- 1 lovey - 12 months and up



Focus Area #1:

Sleep Props

Our goal is to put your newborn down drowsy, but awake.

As baby approaches 12 weeks, we will work on incrementally putting baby down more awake/less drowsy, until baby falls asleep from wide awake, without any sleep props or lingering eat to sleep association.

Drowsy but awake: What does this look like? In the perfect world, baby would be calm, relaxed, and eyes started to get heavy, but not yet closed. Baby would be laid down, and settle to sleep. Babies are not always so easy though, and may not always show this drowsy state. If this is the case, we are looking for baby to be tired, but calm.

Sleep Prop: A sleep prop is anything your baby relies on in order to get to the drowsy state, or to get to sleep. Babies will need support from you in the first few weeks to get to sleep and using sleep props is absolutely the right thing to do. However, as they get older we have to support baby to develop their own self-soothing strategies and move away from “sleep props”. If your child depends on a “prop” to fall asleep – such as breastfeeding, bottles, pacifiers, patting, rocking, or even sucking on parents’ fingers– then they will find it difficult to get back to sleep without their “prop.”.

At this stage, one of the most common sleep props is feeding to sleep. Have it in your mind that you will try not to feed (breast or bottle) to sleep. Of course, this is next to impossible to achieve 100% of the time, and putting your baby down in his crib already asleep from time to time is fine. I also want to note that it is okay to have the feeding as one of your last steps before bed at this age. As baby approaches the 12-week point, we will move the feeding to the beginning of the bedtime routine.

Pacifier: These can be a great tool for helping newborns calm down and bridge the gap between one sleep cycle to the next. I will encourage you to use the pacifier in times when it seems like we have missed the window and baby is pushing into over tiredness, or if we are trying to extend a nap time. We do need to use the pacifier with some caution though because babies can become dependent on the pacifier for sleep and then it is a sleep prop. If the baby begins to associate the pacifier with every sleep situation, then it will interfere with the natural development of consolidated sleep. Therefore we will offer the baby lots of opportunity to fall asleep without it.



Focus Area #2:

Feedings, Routines and “Schedules”

Our goal is for baby to take Full Feeds using Eat, Play, Sleep Routine.

Encourage full feeds during the day by using an EAT, PLAY, SLEEP pattern. Somewhere between 20 and 30 minutes provides adequate feeding time for newborns (the same is true for both breastfed and bottle-fed babies). For most babies, feeding times will be every two to three hours.

STAGES OF DROWSINESS

The signs of drowsiness to watch for while feeding baby all the or with a bottle

- 

1. Baby is alert, wide eyed and actively eating with little pause
- 

2. Baby gets a far away look in the eyes as eye focus becomes soft. Takes longer pauses during feeding.
- 

3. Eyelids get heavy and start to close half way, with longer pauses
- 

4. Eyelids close or heavy blinking occurs. Eyelids may close for several seconds and then pop open again.
- 

5. Eyelids mainly closes. Eating is stalled with long pauses and light sucking. Eyes will open periodically every few minutes.

Our goal is to get in as many calories as possible during the daytime, so in time, she will be able to start reducing night feeds, when developmentally appropriate. If her feeds during the day are too far apart, she will naturally need to eat more overnight.

Try to keep baby awake through feeds, as much as possible. This is not always easy when baby is a fresh newborn and sleepy!

While feeding, you may need to talk to baby, tickle her feet, sit her up and burp her, strip her down and use a wash cloth, etc. to keep her awake.

Note: In the first few week of life it is completely normal for babies to cluster feed and feed more frequently. They will almost always fall asleep when feeding which is completely normal! Try to encourage full feeds and Eat, Play sleep only when your baby is ready.



Encourage “Twelve Hours of Day, Twelves Hours of Night”

This will help baby babies establish your baby’s natural circadian rhythm. An example daytime routine flow for baby will look like this:

9:00 AM Wake up: Feed upon waking in a bright room (not the bedroom), play
Awake 45 min NAP ONE, roughly 1.5-2 hours Feed upon waking, play
Awake 45 min NAP TWO, hopefully another 1.5-2 hours Feed upon waking, play
Awake 45 min NAP THREE, hopefully another 1.5-2 hours Feed upon waking, play
Awake 45 min NAP FOUR Feed upon waking, play
Awake 45 min Nap FIVE, may be a cat nap Play briefly, then bedtime routine
9PM Bedtime

****Important:** Follow wake times- not the clock. Do not Exceed Age-Appropriate Wake Times. Newborn babies (up to three months old) will need to take 4-5 naps per day, and these naps should ideally be between one to two hours.

Cap any individual nap at 2.5 hours, to keep daytime feedings on track.

Age-Appropriate Wake Times (WT)

Start to get baby ready to sleep 10-15 minutes prior to the end of the wake

Birth to 6 Weeks 30-45 Minutes

6 to 9 Weeks 45-60



Focus Area #3:

Bedtime Routine and Falling Sleep Method

Bedtime Routine

Establishing a good bedtime routine right from day one is a great way to help your baby organize days and nights and start to consolidate nighttime sleep more quickly. I suggest starting a bedtime routine off with a bath – it's a great first step. It's such a significantly different experience that your child will soon learn that a bath means bedtime is near.

Bedtime Routine (approximately 30-45 minutes)

1. Bath
2. Massage
3. Pajamas/swaddle
4. Feeding
5. Kisses goodnight, bedtime song, and into crib, drowsy but awake.

Last feed: Your routine should always include a full feed to ensure baby's tummy is full. And it will likely be a tricky time of day to keep baby awake during the feed. Do not allow her to close her eyes while eating. Keep her awake. Keep a close eye on her through her feeding and try to keep baby aware of her surroundings by stimulating with touch or talking. You might actually have to remove her from the breast or bottle until she is more alert and is able to continue feeding. Keep baby awake while you are burping as well. Be aware, the rhythmic burping can put baby to sleep, so burp enough for baby to be comfortable, but don't allow baby to fall asleep on you.

Lay Baby down Drowsy, but Awake: Once her feed is complete, give a hug and kiss, and lay down into her bassinet drowsy but awake. I strongly encourage you to put your best effort into baby's bedtime routine and getting her to fall asleep in her crib independently as your starting point.



Swaddle: I recommend swaddling baby until baby is 8 weeks of age. While baby may not love the process of being swaddled, they typically do benefit from being swaddled. Once baby is older than 2 weeks, it is common to break out of a swaddle blanket. Your sanity may benefit from a Velcro or zip up swaddle. A client favorite is the Love to Dream Arms up Swaddle, as it's a very natural position, and it zips so they cannot break out.

Night Feedings

When your baby wakes up in the middle of the night, you should wait a couple of minutes before you respond. Take time to assess baby's needs. If she is hungry, you'll know! If she fusses for longer than a few minutes, you can go to her and feed her. However, before you start the feed, delay it by changing the diaper first (unless you'll need to change after eating, due to poop). This is to delay the gratification of the nighttime feeds. Your baby will then be less likely to connect waking and crying with feeding. Keep an eye on baby through the feed, and do your best to keep her awake, so she can go back to her crib aware of her surroundings once the feed is finished. If she cries, repeat your bedtime method, and practice using the independent sleep skills.

You should keep baby in the room at night. Keep the lights low and your voice quiet so that she doesn't become over-stimulated. Nighttime is for sleeping, so resist the urge to watch TV, play on your phone or turn on lights. This will also help you resettle faster when you get back to your own bed.

Personal Best/Core Night

As a brand-new newborn, your baby will (hopefully!) only wake when it's time to eat at night. After 6 weeks of age, with good weight gain, you can start following this method, unless your pediatrician has given you set rules for your baby's night feeding due to slow weight gain. If your baby has shown you that he can sleep a certain length of time through the night, which is his personal best/Core Night, for at 3-4 nights, you no longer need to feed him during this span of time. With these good sleep skills, this should be easy if your baby is ready to stretch the time between feeds. Please remember, rules for your newborn are flexible. If he had an off day and simply needs a feed one night a little earlier, it's okay! Consistency as he gets older will help with working towards less night feeds and more sleep.



It's Morning!

It is often hard to tell when the nighttime ends with a newborn. This is when we look at day and night being a 12-hour interval. If baby went to bed at 9:00 p.m., 9:00 a.m. will be the start of the day. The best way to signal that the morning has officially begun is to take baby out of the room and feed in a bright daytime environment such as the living room or the kitchen. Feeding in the bright daytime environment will also help to regulate his circadian rhythm.



Helpful Hints for Success with Newborns



- **At 2 weeks old**, practice independent sleep skill at every bedtime. If you can start before- great!
- **If you have been diligent in creating healthy sleep habits** in your newborn by ensuring he is not relying on props and is able to fall asleep on his own, chances are he will wean himself off nighttime feeds somewhere between 10 and 13 weeks of age.
- **Beware of your baby monitor!** With a monitor we respond to our babies at the slightest whimper instead of allowing our babies a chance to find their own way back to sleep. Without a monitor, it might take a few minutes for you to hear the baby and a few more to actually respond. By that time, he may fall back asleep on his own!
- **Six weeks marks a turning point for many babies**, and their sleep cycle begins to settle down so that they sleep longer periods during the night (three to five hours). In the meantime, don't worry about the fact that he is spending so much time eating and sleeping.
- **Swaddling is most effective** during your baby's first eight weeks of life. After that, transition one arm for a few days before removing the second arm. AAP recommendation is to remove swaddle at 8 weeks of age, or first sign of rolling, whichever happens first.
- **Bottles: If your baby is breastfeeding well**, and you feel comfortable, try offering a bottle once per day. Bedtime is a great place to start to ensure baby's belly is full. Plus this a great way to get your partner involved in the bedtime routine.



The 5 S's- Helpful Calming Tools for an Over Tired Baby

The 5 S's were Developed by Dr Harvey Karp.

The purpose is to help turn on a newborns calming reflex, which can be under developed in some newborns. If you find your baby is extremely fussy, develops colic, or seems hard to settle in the early evening hours, these tools can be helpful.

-try not to use for the first nap and bedtime.

1. Swaddling
2. Side/stomach position – IN your arms!
3. Shushing
4. Swinging (more of a jiggle in your arms)
5. Sucking

The key to the 5 S's is that they need to be done properly and initially in this order for them to work effectively. If you are interested in learning more, google some videos to show you how to utilize this tool.

Help and support is always available!

Please reach out to me to book a one off troubleshooting call or full 2 week support packages.

Sleep well.





GET IN TOUCH

Margot Carpenter

Certified Sleep Sense™ Consultant

 +852 5791 9925

 margot@bubzzz.com

 [margot.bubzzzsleep](https://www.instagram.com/margot.bubzzzsleep)

 www.bubzzz.com