

I'm Not a Cry Baby, I Just Need Your Help

Crying is a normal, everyday event in my life. It's really hard for me to tell you in words when I need something. The only way I know how to tell you that I'm hungry, sick, wet, uncomfortable, lonely, bored, tired or in pain is to cry.

What I Want You to Know

Crying is my way of asking for help.
My crying doesn't mean you are a bad parent or that I'm a terrible baby. Some babies cry very little while others cry a lot.

I'm not trying to upset you or cause you stress. Crying is the only way I know to tell you what I need right now.

- need love
- scared
- hungry
- wet
- uncomfortable
- lonely
- hurting
- "hello, I'm here!"



Responding to my cries will not spoil me. Actually, I feel really secure and safe when you respond to me in a loving, calm way.

Sometimes, no matter what you do, you may not be able to soothe me. This

kind of constant crying is called colic. No one really knows what causes it. When you've tried all the usual things to calm me and they haven't worked, don't get upset. Ask a friend or family member to watch me for a while. My colic should end by the time I'm three-months-old.

Here's How You Can Help Me

It's hard for you to know what my needs are when I'm crying. Pay attention to me when I cry, *be patient*, and *try different things to soothe me*. When you do this, you'll learn a lot about what I need when I cry. I may need you to feed me or change my wet diaper. I could be crying to tell you that I'm hot or I need to be burped. Sometimes, I simply get bored or lonely and need you to give me a toy, pick me up, smile, talk or sing to me.

Notice what comforts me. Play soft music, pat me on the back, talk and sing to me, and hold me in the position I like best. It really helps me when you walk around with me, hold me close and rock me.

I know you get frustrated sometimes when I cry so much. Please *don't ever shake or spank me* to make me stop crying. I'm too young to understand and I'll just cry more if you hurt me. If you get rough with me, you can easily injure my soft bones, organs and brain.

If you take time to understand why I cry and how I like to be soothed, you'll have an easier time responding to my needs. Meeting my needs in a sensitive, supportive way during the first several months of my life helps me feel safe and loved.

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating

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