

Should I let my baby, "Cry it out?"

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You're tired. Your baby is crying. You might be wondering, do I have to do something about it every time?

Aren't we supposed to let babies "cry it out" sometimes?

Here is what we really know about a baby's cries:

Crying is a tool

- In fact, crying is the only tool that your baby has to signal that she needs something from you. She does not yet have the ability to soothe herself or take care of herself.
- Crying is unpleasant to adults so we can be motivated to do something about it.



What we do about crying matters

- If ignored, babies fail to learn that they have any control over how they feel. On the other hand, a consistent response teaches babies that they have some way of helping themselves feel better.
- Your baby will learn best if you respond, no matter what time of day it is. Eventually, your baby will learn to soothe herself.

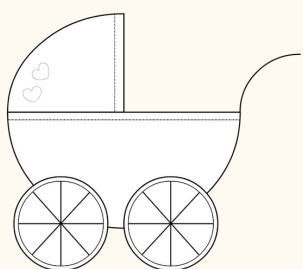
Soothing a crying baby



- Babies cry for lots of reasons. For example, your crying baby may be hungry or uncomfortable.
- If you have seen to these normal needs, but your baby is still crying, check out the following page for suggestions:

Still Crying, now what?

- Make sure their clothing is not pinching or tight. Undress the baby to check for marks or pinching.
- Hold the baby against your chest. Babies often feel more comfortable if you hold them close.
- Give baby a gentle massage. Rub on lotion or a light oil, such as almond oil. Gently massage baby's arms, legs, toes, tummy.
- Offer a soft voice, kind words, and comforting touches
- Try rocking the baby continuously, lying across your lap
- Swaddle baby with a warm, soft blanket with just the head uncovered.
- Give the baby a warm bath.
- Go for a walk or ride with the baby to get some fresh air.



One last thing...



Don't worry if you have missed your baby's cries in the past. A few bad experiences will not hurt your baby. Rather, the day in, day out experience of your care will be what helps them learn to trust you. By the end of the first year of life, your baby will be finding ways to help soothe herself.

At this point, you will have taught her important ways to calm herself down and regulate herself – a key characteristic of healthy people.



**For more
information**

www.extension.org

www.arfamilies.org

www.uaex.edu/nlj

**National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome &
Period of Purple Crying:**
<https://www.dontshake.org/purple-crying>