



Nurturing Versus Spoiling Children

Parents worry about spoiling their baby. It is not pleasant to be around a spoiled child. Learning about manners and consideration for others begins with the way children are treated beginning in infancy.

Infants must have warmth, food and LOTS of cuddling. When babies cry, they have a need. Hunger causes pain. Urine in a wet diaper can sting delicate baby skin. Being too hot or too cold or needing human contact will cause crying.

Babies cry when they are overly tired or feeling stress from the excitement of a busy day of riding in the car or being around other people. Babies cry when they hurt or feel uncomfortable or are stressed out. It is their way to signal that something is wrong.

Fussiness is hard for parents. Sometimes the harder you try to comfort the baby, the MORE the baby cries. At these times it may be helpful to do nothing but make baby as comfortable as possible and then let him/her cry for a little while.

Beginning at a few weeks of age and lasting until around age 3 months or so, some babies cry excessively. The crying seems to build between late afternoon and late evening hours. The baby may have colic. This can be a trying time for parents and often leads to exhaustion for everyone. Fortunately, colic naturally passes. **IF YOUR INFANT CRIES FOR MORE THAN 30 MINUTES, CALL YOUR DOCTOR.** Prolonged crying can be a sign of illness or a medical problem.

Each baby has his/her own personality. Some love to be held and snuggled and others find all this "snuggle stuff" to be too much handling! Watch your baby for signs about what works best for him/her. Never worry that you will spoil a young infant by holding the baby too much.

HINTS AND TIPS

- Very gently handle your baby. Avoid jerky movements or rough handling. Use feeding, bathing, dressing and diapering as times to give gentle and loving touches.
- Keep a reasonably calm and relaxed routine for your young infant. Changes in routine add stress and may cause fussiness.
- During periods of fussiness, make your infant comfortable and try to relax. Your strong emotions will add to baby's tension.
- Take care of your needs for rest and relaxation. Ask others to give you a regular break and take a nap, a walk or relax with a long bath. (Parents can experience fussiness, too.)

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