



Identifying an Infant's "Cues" for Sleep

Developed by:

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LEVEL 1

- Facial changes – not animated expressions, flat affect, no smiles or giggles
- Stops moving body actively or purposefully, becomes still and quiet
- Starts to FUSS just a little
- May look uncomfortable (your natural tendency is to pick up and change the baby's position or to stimulate him sensing that he/she might be bored)
- May go to sleep with little effort, falling asleep almost immediately – 5 minutes

LEVEL 2

- Louder fussing, more frequent fussing
- Starting to Yawn
- Rubbing fists into eyes
- Baby starts to suck thumb, finger, pacifier or wants breast or bottle
- Burrowing head (If you pick the baby up at this point he/she is likely to burrow into your shoulder)
- Jerky movements of arms and legs
- Takes 5-15 minutes to fall asleep and may need assistance such as pacifier or sucking your finger, rocking, singing, saying "HUSH" softly into ears, white noise of fan or water, walking, patting back, drinking bottle/nursing, swaddling or holding tight, light bouncing or swaying

LEVEL 3

- Huge Yawns that tip baby over
- Scrunching up face, distressed look
- Hard, uncontrolled movements of arms/legs – may seem like the baby is hitting you
- Screaming, crying loudly
- Sobbing uncontrollably
- Very hard to console
- Takes 20-45 minutes to help fall asleep
- If can't fall asleep baby may eventually go into very tired state either "crashing to sleep" only to wake up 15 minutes later or remain awake unable to sleep



Nighttime Activities to Prepare Infants for Sleep

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1 hour prior to estimated bedtime or to help assess when baby is tired:

- Complete bath, lotion rub, diaper and clothing change
- Avoid Johnny jump-ups, jump-a-roos, and bouncy chairs
- Avoid TV, computer screens, cell phones, bright lights, loud/unexpected noises
- Go for short 10 minute stroller rides (if you are outside baby may either fall asleep in stroller and not transfer to crib or may not show the early signs of being tired due to all the stimulus of wind, light, sounds, sights)

30 minutes prior to expected bedtime

- Lie baby on floor with lights low to cue baby it is night time, talk softly and slowly to baby while you do light household tasks of folding/putting away laundry etc.
- Read books to baby or have baby hold soft or quiet toys
- Use slings or baby carriers or swings for short amounts of time (10 minutes) then take baby out to see if baby will show signs of tired (Lay baby on the floor or bed to see the cues more easily.
- Avoid tickling baby or active games such as throwing baby in air
- Listen (5-10 minutes) to soft music with slow, steady beat (not all classical or lullaby music is calming)
- Prepare baby's room for sleeping by pulling shades, turning off lights etc.

Time for sleep

- Transition: Go into baby's room for sleeping and tell baby it's about time to go to sleep.
- Connect and calm: Soothe baby by rocking, singing or shushing for a few minutes
- Cue: Lie baby on sleeping surface, turn on white noise, sing a good night song, say a prayer, or in some other way "cue" baby it's time for sleep
- Switch to sleep: Allow baby to find his/her position to move into sleep. If necessary pat to calm. Allow to fuss no more than one minute. If necessary pick up and help to sleep. Repeat practicing lying down for sleep each night until the baby no longer startles and is able to fall asleep independently.

You may find your baby is tired sooner than expected by trying these methods