

How to settle a crying baby

This is a transcript of the Raising Children Network video available at http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/crying_baby_video.html. It contains tips to help with a crying baby, including a checklist of common things that can upset a baby and cause crying. You can check whether your baby is hungry, tired or uncomfortable and whether the conditions are right for settling.

Narrator: When your baby is crying, it can be hard to keep a level head, but it can help to go through a checklist of all the things it might be:

1. Does she need your comfort or attention?

Try holding her in a cradle position, gently rocking, walking with her, quiet whispering or singing

2. Is she hungry?

Follow your instincts, but if she has fed in the last two hours you might try something else to help her settle.

3. Does she have a dirty nappy or a rash?

For rashes rinse with clean water, pat dry and use a barrier cream.

4. Does she need a burp?

Try holding upright and patting her back which can soothe her, even if she doesn't need to burp.

5. Is she uncomfortable?

Check that she is not too hot or cold and has comfortable, loose clothing.

6. Does she want to suck?

Offer her a dummy, or help her find her own fingers to suck.

7. Is she overtired?

If she has been awake for a while, try wrapping her gently but firmly and putting her down in a quiet, dark and safe place.

8. Are the conditions right for her to settle?

Try reducing stimulation by making the room darker and quieter. A gentle regular sound of either soft music or white noise from a fan or a radio between channels can also help her tune out.

9. Is she sick? Does she have a fever?

Take her temperature. Talk to your doctor if you have any doubts.

10. Do you need a break?

Give your baby to someone else and take a break. If you are on your own, put your baby down in a safe place and take a break. Try again a few minutes later when you are calmer.

Gavin [*father of five*]: The baby's not going to hurt itself from crying too much for an extra minute, and that minute that you spend away from the baby, it just gives you time to think and come back when you are a little bit more relaxed.
