

Where to go for help and support if you are struggling to cope with your baby's crying

Babies can cry for reasons such as if they are hungry, tired, wet/dirty or if they are unwell. If you think there is something wrong with your baby or the crying won't stop speak to your GP, Midwife or Health Visitor.

- If you are worried that your baby is unwell call NHS 111.
- NSPCC helpline 0800 800 5000 - Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends.
(It's free and you don't have to say who you are)
- Visit ICON website's [page for parents](#)



What is our response

Research points to persistent crying in babies being a potential trigger for some parents/care givers to lose control and shake a baby. It also shows that around 70% of babies who are shaken are shaken by men.

Any prevention programme should include male caregivers and use the best opportunities to reach them as well as support all parents/caregivers with information about crying and how to cope with a crying baby.

Key Information

Comfort methods

can sometimes soothe the baby and the crying will stop. Is the baby hungry, tired or in need of a nappy change?



Never, ever shake or hurt a baby. It can cause lasting brain damage and death.

Talk calmly to your baby. Stroke them gently. Try placing your baby face down on your lap, or hold them against you and try stroking their back rhythmically.

Hum or sing to your baby. Let them hear a repeating, constant and soothing sound. Classical music, including piano and guitar, can sometimes soothe some babies.

Hold them close – skin to skin.

Go outside with your baby and walk them in a pram or in a baby sling. The rocking motion can be very soothing for a baby. If you can't go outside try a gentle rocking motion inside. Walk around whilst gently rocking your baby.

Sucking can help relieve a baby's distress. If offering the breast is not possible, a dummy can soothe a baby and can be given from 4 weeks onward for babies where breastfeeding is established or at any time if the baby is formula fed.

Try giving them a warm bath.

Not all of these will work all of the time but remember, that's OK.

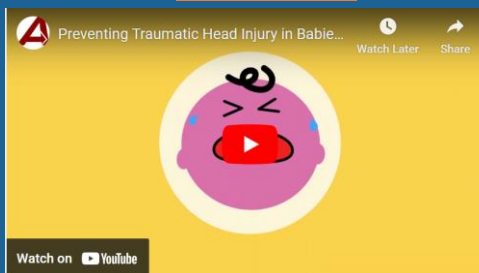
Stay calm, this phase will pass.

7 Minute Briefing



What makes a baby vulnerable

Preventing Traumatic Head Injury in Babies by PHE in Partnership with ICON - YouTube



What is ICON? The ICON Programme is a preventative programme, based around helping parents cope with a crying baby. The word 'ICON' represents the following message:

I – Infant crying is normal
C – Comforting methods can sometimes soothe the baby
O – It's OK to walk away
N – Never, ever shake a baby

What are the key messages of ICON?

- Crying is a normal part of child development
- All babies will cry a lot from the ages of 2 weeks to 3-4 months, but this can vary from baby to baby.
- Crying seems to peak in the late afternoon and early evening... but this can vary between babies.
- Crying is normal... all parents can feel stressed but babies are not doing this on purpose.
- Shaking a baby can cause significant injury and even death. Better to put you baby down safely and walk away for a few minutes if you are struggling.

The Curve of Early Infant Crying

A baby may start to cry more frequently at about 2 weeks of age. The crying may get more frequent and last longer during the next few weeks, hitting a peak at about 6 to 8 weeks. Every baby is different, but after about 8 weeks, babies start to cry less and less each week.



Barr, R (1990) The normal crying curve: What do we really know? *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*.