

Your Baby's Sleep Habits - Birth to 6 Months Old

If your baby just won't sleep, you're not alone! Many parents desperately want their babies to sleep soundly each night, and to take long, restorative naps. These parents are often unsure how to help their babies sleep well. This flyer is designed to give you the information you need to help your baby learn better sleeping habits.

Your Newborn

In the newborn and infant stages, your baby will spend more time asleep than he does awake – and that's very normal! Newborns sleep around 16-18 hours each day; by 3 months of age, they still need about 14-16 hours of sleep per day. Infants should also drink 25 - 35* ounces of breast milk each day, or 20 - 30 ounces of formula.

**for babies under 1 month amounts will vary; talk to your pediatrician.*

Most babies aren't ready to follow a schedule in the first few months of life. However, there are steps you can take to help your baby regularly get the sleep he needs:

- **Keep wake time short.** Most infants can only handle 1-2 hours of wake time before they need to go back to sleep.
- **Keep days bright and nights dark.** This will help your newborn sort out any day/night confusion and promote more sleep at night.
- **Encourage an eat-play-sleep rhythm.** During the day, feed your baby, then encourage her to stay awake and "play" for a bit before putting her down for her nap.
- **Swaddle.** Infants generally like to be wrapped up snugly, so try swaddling your baby for sleep. Be sure to swaddle with arms and legs flexed in an infant's natural posture.
- **Use white noise.** Some babies sleep well with loud, "neutral" background noise (like the sound of a running hair dryer.) Try a white noise machine, or download some white noise MP3s.

Your 4 Month Old

Around 4 months, your baby's sleeping patterns change permanently. You may notice that she starts to wake more frequently at night, and has a harder time staying asleep at nap time. This is all very normal, but it's also exhausting! Fortunately, there are methods you can use to help your baby learn to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Most 4 month old babies aren't ready to follow a strict schedule. However, you can use this sample 4 month schedule to develop a gentle routine:

TIME	ACTIVITY
6:30	Wake and breast milk or formula*
7:45	Nap
8:15-8:45	Breast milk or formula*
9:45-10:00	Nap
10:45-11:15	Breast milk or formula*
11:45-12:00	Nap
1:15-1:45	Breast milk or formula*
2:00	Nap
3:45-4:15	Breast milk or formula*
4:45	Nap
5:45	Begin bedtime routine (possibly include a feeding* as part of the routine)
6:00	Breast milk or formula*
6:15	Bedtime (goal to be asleep at this time)

**Plus probably 1-3 nighttime feedings.*

**Your baby should drink 25-35 ounces of breast milk each day, or 20-30 ounces of formula.*

Your 6 Month Old

By 6 months, your baby's schedule may start to become more consistent. He'll also be able to sleep longer stretches at night (although many 6 month olds still need 1-2 nighttime feedings.) In general, your 6 month old should nap for about 2-3 total hours each day, and sleep for 11-12 total hours each night.

Use this sample 6 month schedule to help your baby get enough sleep each day:

TIME	ACTIVITY
7:00	Wake and breast milk or formula*, then solids** for breakfast
9:00	Morning nap (at least 1 hour)
10:00	Breast milk or formula*
12:00	Nap (often 30-45 minutes at this age)
1:00	Breast milk or formula*
2:30	Nap (often 30-45 minutes at this age)
4:00	Breast milk or formula*
5:00	Catnap (30 minutes)***
5:30	Partial breast milk or formula* feeding, then solids** for dinner
6:30	Begin bedtime routine (possibly include a feeding* as part of the routine)
7:00	Bedtime
7:30	Goal to be asleep

**Plus probably 1-3 nighttime feedings.*

**Your baby should drink 25-35 ounces of breast milk each day, or 20-30 ounces of formula.*

***Most babies start solid foods at or around 6 months of age.*

****Some 6 month olds still need 4 naps and are still organizing their sleep into 3 naps.*

Information Provided by:

The
BABY SLEEP SITE®

FREE Guide: 5 Ways to Help Your Child Sleep Through The Night

visit babysleepsite.com/free-resources to get started

