



Child Sleep Consulting
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Tips for Better Sleep in the Early Months

1. **Back to Sleep, Tummy to Play-** Both will reduce your baby's risk of SIDS and assist in your child's development, Tummy time is very important for developing muscles, motor skills and balance. You can start with 1-2 minutes a day and gradually work on increasing the time.
2. **Meet Your Baby's Needs-** This is the time for building trust, security and attachment for both you and your baby. Research shows that the more skin to skin contact, responsiveness, touch and eye contact that takes place in the early months, the better hardwired your baby's brain becomes to you and this leads to a more secure attachment.
3. **Soothing-** Try lots of ways to sooth your baby- rocking, bouncing, nursing, baby wearing, massage, sucking, etc. Fussiness can peak at 6 weeks and last up to 3-4 months. Finding ways to soothe your baby to sleep in these early months is the most important thing. Don't worry about creating negative sleep associations.
4. **Establish Consistent and Flexible Routines-** By this, we are referring to a nice flow to your day, not a rigid schedule. Having a simple order to the way you do things each day can help your child learn to anticipate what is happening next. This will help lower anxiety for both of you.
5. **Learn Your Baby's Sleep Cues-** Some examples are: yawning, rubbing eyes, zoning out, mild fussiness or irritability, slowed activity and lack of interest in their current environment. Try to catch these cues early and get your baby down to sleep when they are tired. If you catch this window it will be easier to get your baby to sleep.
6. **Daytime Sleep-** Offer ample opportunities to nap. Wake windows may be as short as 60-90 minutes and naps will vary in length. When they are awake, expose them to natural light to help set their internal clock.

7. **Infant Sleep Averages-**

<u>Age</u>	<u>Wakeful Window</u>	<u>Average # of Sleeps</u>
0-6 weeks	approx. 1 hours	5 to 6 sleeps in 24 hrs
6 weeks to 3 mns	1-1.5 hours	4-5 sleeps in 24 hrs
3-4.5 months	1.5-2 hours	3-4 day sleeps
4.5-6 months	2-2.2 hours	3-4 day sleeps

8. **Create A Friendly Sleep Environment-** In the early months, babies have the ability to shut out outside stimulation and will fall asleep easily in a crowded areas with loud noise. As they get older, they lose this ability and many will sleep better in an area that is quiet and conducive to sleep.
9. **Develop a Relaxing Bedtime Routine-** Bath, book, massage, breast or bottle, swaddle, bedtime is a great order to help your 6-8 week old begin to recognize the signs of bedtime.
10. **Early Bedtime-** Most babies are ready for bed between 6:00-7:00pm
11. **Encourage Restful Sleep at Night-** Keep lights, stimulation and interaction to a minimum. When your baby wakes to feed, do so quietly and put them gently back to sleep.
12. **Sleep When Your Baby Sleeps!**
13. **Support Network-** Having a good support network has been proven to help ease the transition in the newborn months. A list of helpful specialists, organizations and resources can be your greatest asset during this time.