

Why Do Babies Cry?

Babies cry a lot; the good news is that as they grow, they tend to cry less. Babies try to adapt to the external environment after birth, but they still do not have good communication skills. Thus, crying is one of the ways for them to communicate their needs. But it is excessive crying that is often the subject of complaining by parents; epidemiological studies show that at least one-third of parents complain that their baby cries more than average.

The following are some of the common reasons for a baby to cry and their interpretations:

- Mommy, I am hungry. Please feed me quickly!
- Mommy this diaper hurts. It is too tight, and it is wet, too.
- Mommy, I want to talk to you. Please pick me up, sing me a song.
- Mommy, I do not like the noise all around. Please take me to some calm place.
- Mommy, please massage my tummy. It hurts.
- Mommy, I am feeling sleepy. Maybe sing me a lullaby.
- Mommy, I am feeling cold/hot and take off some of my clothes.
- Mommy, the tag on the new dress hurts.
- Mommy, please massage my gums a bit. It hurts there.

Though it would be difficult to say if a baby cries more than usual, generally there is agreement among specialists that if a child cries more than three hours a day, one should think about other causes apart from the more usual ones.

- **Pain-** Your baby may start crying quite suddenly and may cry for a long amount of time with short pauses to breathe. Undress your baby to look for possible reasons, and do not forget to pay attention to their body temperature.
- **Illness-** Weak and prolonged moaning is just a baby's way of saying that he or she is feeling awful.
- **Colic-** It is a poorly understood condition, but some babies cry more in the evening, as it seems that they get overwhelmed by new experiences.

Soothing a crying baby

- Hold your baby; contact is something they seek most often. Babies love to be held and when they grow old one can use front carriers or backpacks for babies. It is a misconception among parents that holding a crying baby will spoil them, as physical contact between a baby and its parents is a natural thing and won't spoil them.
- Breastfeeding is perhaps the most potent tool to soothe a baby.
- Rhythmically move your baby, either by hands or in a pram. Many parents do that instinctively, and it works in most cases.
- Play music; some soft and rhythmic music can have a soothing effect on a child. It was not that long ago when the child heard the rhythm of your heartbeat 24 hours a day.
- Massage your baby.

- Distract your baby; just do something different, dancing, making a funny noise, or anything. It often works.

Toddlers cry for the same reasons as babies. They also seek attention or cry when they cannot express themselves. But toddlers also have better control over their crying. Thus, they may learn to cry if they notice that it helps them to get something done.

About the author:

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Dr. Preet is a family physician. He has been practicing medicine for the last 15 years and often sees children with various health and behavioral difficulties. He understands that when a baby cries for too long and often, it may be worrisome for parents. He is also a passionate writer.

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