

# Why is my baby crying?

**Crying is a baby's way of communicating that they need you.** Your baby is dependent on you for food, warmth and comfort. You can't spoil your baby by responding to their needs. If babies are comforted when they cry, they will learn that the world is safe, and cry less. When a baby has loving caring experiences, the connections in the brain for feeling good and learning are strengthened. Here's what your baby might be trying to say...

## I am hungry!

Feed your baby. Is your baby showing feeding cues? It is best to start the feed before your baby becomes too upset.

Your baby's stomach is small it won't take very long to empty. Small babies usually feed between eight and 12 times a day.

## I need a cuddle!

Try cuddling baby in a cradle position or sling. Try gentle rocking, walking, singing or whisper to your baby.

## I need to burp!

Try holding baby upright and patting their back. This can be soothing even if your baby does not burp. Babies who have reflux may need to stay upright for 20 minutes after feeds.

## I don't know why!

Babies under four months old often cry in the late afternoon and evenings. This is normal behaviour.

Try a warm bath to relax baby. Try a baby massage.

Some babies have a strong desire to suck – try a clean finger, a dummy or the breast.

## Change my nappy!

Change baby's nappy. If you see a rash, rinse with clean water, dab dry and apply a barrier cream. Give baby some nappy free time.

## I am uncomfortable!

Check if baby is too hot or too cold by feeling baby's tummy. Take care not to overdress your baby.

Generally baby will need one more layer of clothing than you to feel comfortable.

## I am very tired!

Babies find it hard to get to sleep if they are overtired.

Reduce stimulation. Wrap baby gently but firmly. Try rocking baby in a quiet darkened room. Play soft music or rhythmic sounds or continuous machine noises.

## I don't feel well!

Is baby sick? Does baby have a rash or a fever? A normal temperature for a baby is 36.5°C–37.5°C. If your baby has a temperature above 38°C and appears unwell Ring 13HEALTH (13 432 585) and ask to speak to a child health nurse for further advice. **Ring 000 if you are concerned.**



# Support organisations and helplines

## 13 HEALTH (24 hr) – Ask to speak with a child health nurse

13 43 25 84

## Beyond Blue | [www.beyondblue.com.au](http://www.beyondblue.com.au)

1300 22 4636

## Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia (PANDA) | [www.panda.org.au](http://www.panda.org.au)

1300 726 306

## Pregnancy, Birth and Baby Helpline (24 hr) | [www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au](http://www.pregnancybirthbaby.org.au)

1800 88 2436

## Australian Breastfeeding Association | [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

1800 686 268

# Further support and information

## Feeding cues picture sheet

<https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bfinfo/feeding-cues>

## Reflux fact sheet

[www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/fact-sheet-reflux](http://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/fact-sheet-reflux)

## Breastfeeding information

[www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-categories](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-categories)

<http://globalhealthmedia.org/videos/breastfeeding>

## Bottle feeding information

[www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bfinfo/caregivers.html](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bfinfo/caregivers.html)

<http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/8/31/325/infant-formula-feeding>

[http://raisingchildren.net.au/bottle-feeding/newborns\\_bottle-feeding.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/bottle-feeding/newborns_bottle-feeding.html)

## Baby massage video

[http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/baby\\_massage\\_video.html](http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/baby_massage_video.html)

## Infant settling information

[www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/community-health-services/ellen-barron-family-centre/responsive-settling/](http://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/community-health-services/ellen-barron-family-centre/responsive-settling/)

## How to cope with broken sleep

[www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bfinfo/how-cope-broken-sleep](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bfinfo/how-cope-broken-sleep)

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## Contact us

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