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Colic (The Crying Baby)

What is colic?

Colic is unexplained crying (not due to pain or hunger). The bouts of crying usually last 1 to 2 hours and the child acts fine between bouts. Your child usually stops crying when held. The colic begins before 2 weeks of age and usually stops by 3 months of age.

About 1 in 10 babies have colic. Colic tends to occur in high-need babies with a sensitive temperament. Colic is not the result of bad parenting, so don't blame yourself. Colic is not caused by too much gas.

How can I help my child?

1. **Hold and soothe your baby whenever he/she cries without a reason.** A soothing, gentle activity is the best approach to helping a baby relax, settle down, and go to sleep. Consider using the following to calm your baby:
 - cuddling your child in a rocking chair
 - rocking your child in a cradle
 - swaddling your baby in a light blanket
 - placing your child in a frontpack or pouch
 - placing your child in a windup swing or vibrating chair
 - going for a stroller (buggy) ride, outdoors or indoors.
2. **A last resort: Let your baby cry himself/herself to sleep.** If your baby has not stopped crying after 30 minutes of holding and comforting and has been fed recently, your baby is probably trying to go to sleep. Wrap him/her up and place him/her in the crib. He/she will probably be somewhat restless until he/she falls asleep. But if your baby cries for over 15 minutes, pick him/her up and try the soothing activities again.
3. **Get rest and help for yourself.** Avoid getting exhausted. Get at least one nap a day. Ask your spouse, a friend, or a relative for help with other children and chores. Caring for a colicky baby is a two-person job.

Call the office right away if:

- You can't find a way to soothe your baby's crying.
- Your baby is less than 1 month old AND now acts sick.
- You are afraid you might hurt your baby.
- Your baby is acting very sick.
- Your baby has a fever (a rectal temperature > 100.4)

Call the office during office hours if:

- Your baby is not gaining weight and may be hungry.
- You have other concerns or questions.