



London Health Sciences Centre

Patient Information

BABY'S SECOND NIGHT

You've made it through your first 24 hours as a new mom. Maybe you have other children, but you are a new mom all over again...and now it is your baby's second night.

All of a sudden, your little one discovers that he's no longer back in the warmth and comfort of your womb-where he has spent the last 8 ½ or 9 months. He isn't hearing your familiar heartbeat, the swooshing of the placental arteries, and the soothing sound of your lungs or the comforting gurgling of your intestines. All sorts of people have been handling him, and he's not yet used to the new noises, lights, sounds, and smells. He has found one thing though, and that's his voice...and you find that each time you take him off the breast where he comfortably drifted off to sleep, and put him in the bassinet/crib-he protests, loudly!

In fact, each time you put him back on the breast he nurses for a bit and then goes to sleep. As you take him off and put him back to bed – he cries again...and starts rooting around, looking for you. This goes on – seemingly for hours. A lot of moms are convinced it is because their milk isn't "in" yet, and the baby is starving. However, it may not be that, but the baby's sudden awakening to the fact that the most comforting and comfortable place for him to be is at the breast. It's the closest to "home" he can get. It seems that this is normal among babies – mothers all over the world have noticed the same thing. Your baby being at the breast so frequently helps your milk to come in.

So, what do you do? When he drifts off to sleep at the breast after a feeding, break the suction and slide your nipple gently out of his mouth. Don't move him except to place his head more comfortably on your breast. Don't try and burp him – just snuggle with him until he falls into a deep sleep where he won't be disturbed by being moved. Babies go into a light sleep state first, and then cycle in and out of deep sleep about every ½ hour or so. If your baby starts to root and act as though he wants to go back to breast, that's fine...this is his way of settling and comforting.

Another helpful hint...your baby's hands were his best friends in utero...he could suck on his thumb or his fingers anytime he was the slightest bit disturbed or uncomfortable. Be sure that your baby's hands are free. If your baby scratches himself, it will heal very quickly. Babies need to touch – to feel – and even his touch on your breast will increase your oxytocin levels which will help boost your milk supply!

By the way – your baby might become fussy every once in a while, particularly if you've changed his environment such as going to the doctor's, to church, to the mall, or to the grandparents! Don't let it worry you – sometimes babies just need some extra snuggling at the breast, because for the baby, the breast is "home."

© 2005/Lactation Education Consultants. May be copied and distributed freely. May not be sold.

Reproduced by the Middlesex London Elgin Breastfeeding Coalition from London Health Sciences Centre, Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, Middlesex London Health Unit, and Elgin St Thomas Public Health Unit with permission from Lactation Education Consultants, August 2008. Reviewed January 2013, January 2018.