



# SLEEP GUIDE FOR NEWBORNS AND TODDLERS

## Practical Tips to Getting Started

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

BabySenseDubai



Cells4Life

# About the Author

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She is the founder of BabySenseDubai that aims to provide support and sound educational advice to ensure confident, happy and healthy families.

## About this Book

Sleep plays a vital role in your child's physical, emotional and mental growth. Like any other person of whatever age, a child without enough sleep can be irritable and inattentive. The earlier you can establish good sleep habits the better it is for you and your baby. This book will provide you useful tips on how to make your newborns and toddlers sleep better.



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# Introduction

## Do you know that your baby needs twice as much sleep as you need?

Health care professionals recommend that your baby gets enough sleep but most people may ignore this fact, as they are still not aware of the benefits of sleep for their newborns and toddlers.

Sleep is important for your baby. It affects their moods and their immune system and their capability to develop socially. Sleep affects the way your baby or toddler interacts with you and with other people. As earlier stated, your baby needs as much sleep as you need and more for their brain development. The brain of your child develops at night and nobody can trivialize the importance of brain development. The brain controls most of the anatomical and physiological aspects of the body and so as a parent you need to ensure adequate sleep for your child.

The amount of sleep affects the alertness of the child and their concentration on different developmental aspects and how the child relates with the environment and how they are able to pass through the required psychological stages as described by doctors. Quality sleep is as crucial to your newborns and toddlers as is the nourishment you give them.

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## Chapter 1

# Sleep and Nervous System Development

According to research, the Central Nervous System (CNS) develops as a result of the sleep that your baby gets. The development of the CNS is very important as it coordinates the interaction of the baby and the environment in terms of stimuli and response.

General body development also relies on the amount and the quality of sleep that your baby gets. Further research shows the development of the newborns' immune system occurs while the baby sleeps. The ability of the child to fight diseases will thus depend on the amount of sleep they get.

While your child is awake, they are exposed to different experiences which require time to process. Each of the experiences is new to them and they have not yet learned to block out or how to deal with the sounds and movements they need and those they do not need. Sleep is thus a sanctuary from the social and the physical environment.

There are two cycles of sleep that your baby will experience; deep sleep (Non REM) and active sleep (REM). The two cycles rotate in 45 - 60 minutes cycle.

**Active sleep** involves movements and it is at this time that your baby will twitch, smile, open eyes and other body movements. It is at this time that the baby's brain develops. The body movements indicate the amount of activity going through the baby's brain.

**Deep sleep** is important for your baby as different aspects of development also take part during this time. Research shows that the physical aspect of the brain and other physical aspects of the entire body are developing and thus letting your child enjoy deep sleep is crucial.

Your newborn's or toddler's sleep each day needs to be consistent, to enable your baby to develop as required. Under normal conditions the baby and toddler do not have to be forced to sleep as it is involuntary. Their body processes ensure that they sleep whether you soothe them or not. Sleep is important and if it happens that your baby stays awake for long without sleeping, you should seek help from a trained professional.

## Chapter 2

# Sleep Guide for Babies 0-6 Months

### How much sleep is enough for a baby 0-6 months old?

This needs to be split into more specific ages as the first 6 weeks are all about brain growth and the baby feeds a lot, so they may have very short, one cycle sleeps. And may sleep for an hour and feed for an hour. After this the next 6-12 weeks a baby will start to stay awake a little longer, around 90 minutes which includes feeding and then sleep for 90 minutes. Not every baby falls naturally into these patterns and may start to need some assistance and guidance. They do not have the knowledge of time and they often confuse day and night. Enough sleep in the first 12 weeks can be 16-18 hours, split into a 12 hour night and 4-6 hours during the day. After 12 weeks day sleep is mostly around 4 hours, while once they reach 6 months they drop down to 2-4 hours during the day. As the baby develops, they will recognize the change in times and will thus sleep less during the day and more at night. However, note that the babies require to be fed at least 2-3 times a night, up till 6 weeks and at least twice a night up till 12 weeks, they will only drop to one night feed after 12 weeks. Five straight hours of sleep is often referred to as through the night sleeping.

## Preparing the Babies 0-6 Months to Sleep

It takes a keen mother to learn the signs that a baby is tired and needs resting. You should watch the child while they are playing and in the minutes before they sleep. This will help you recognize the signs to help your baby to achieve sleep when necessary. Common signs that your baby is tired and needs to sleep include hiccupping, sneezing, blinking, rubbing its eyes, random and jerky movements and crying. Young babies are mostly relaxed and sleepy after each feeding.

Mothers can initiate a bedtime pattern that may include feeding, bathing and some form of singing or story-telling for the child. Some of the babies 0-6 months tend to be more alert during the evening and at night– when the environment is quite rather than during the day when they are involved with lots of playing. As the babies grow more towards 6 months, they have more play time during the day and they get to learn more from their surroundings. They are more in touch with the environment and they have less time to play at night as they are tired. The time they sleep at night will continue increasing compared to the time they sleep during the day.

## Getting Your Baby to Sleep

You should put your baby on their back to sleep. When a baby is tired, they prefer being placed in the cot while awake and then they will learn to sleep on their own. Babies have preferences in terms of the environment they sleep in; some will sleep well in noisy places and others will sleep well in dark and silent places.

You have to watch your baby to know what it wants. To settle your baby to sleep:

- ☞ Have constant noise like humming or family conversations or even singing which relaxes the baby to sleep. You can also try vibration noise, often called white noise and see if it works for your baby.
- ☞ Most babies enjoy being swaddled and will start to enjoy their arms out after 8-12 weeks.
- ☞ Do not put a hat on your baby to sleep at night.
- ☞ Settle baby in the cot on their back or side, use patting or rocking and as you slow down they will calm down. This relaxes them to sleep.
- ☞ Rock the baby in its pram or crib for some time and let him sleep. Try to avoid rocking in your arms. Babies under 6 months prefer when the mother or carer stays with them before sleeping.
- ☞ Check that the room temperature is cool before you leave. You can regulate the babies clothing and covers to ensure that your baby is comfortable. You should also ensure the baby is not wrapped too tight and can move their arms.
- ☞ Some babies under 6 months may prefer sucking a dummy while other like a massage before sleeping.
- ☞ Ensure that you follow a similar sleeping pattern every day or night, this will help your baby gets used to the pattern quickly.
- ☞ A soothing voice and calm talk works miracles in getting babies under 6 months to sleep.

## Chapter 3

# Sleep Guide for Babies 6-12 Months

Most babies 6-12 months are able to sleep through the night without many wakeful periods where they may require your attention. At this age, babies can distinguish between different times and know that night time is sleeping time. They tend to sleep more during the night and less during the day. They have learned a lot and they stay active interacting with the environment more. Sleep between 14-16 hours per day is enough. They may sleep for 10-12 hours during the night and the rest is for naps during the day. Some however tend to sleep more.

Babies 6-12 months after learning to interact with the environment can tend to stay awake sometime during the night as they engage in different activities that keep them alert like leg and arm movements. The baby may wake up for one feed and then sleep again. However as earlier mentioned, the baby gets used to sleeping throughout the night. Babies tend to like a feed before sleep. You can introduce a [dream feed](#), ensuring that they do not fully wake and even breastfeed them. Note that repeating the pattern every night makes your baby get used to it.

## Preparing Your Baby 6-12 Months for Sleep

The 14-16 hours a day that your baby sleeps consists of morning and evening naps and around 10-12 hours at night. It is good to note that babies are susceptible to a number of diseases including ear infections, bronchiolitis, coughs and sore throats among others. The baby also starts teething. These infections affect the sleeping patterns of your child and once they are better, you have to manage the baby's sleeping pattern again.

To prepare your baby for a good night's sleep, ensure that your baby gets enough sleep during the day. Start with making their mealtimes regular and have snacks during different times of the day. The baby should also be allowed to engage in lots of activities during the day. This can be enhanced by letting them crawl and encouraging healthy stimulation. This will make the baby tired and she will be able to sleep better through the night. Once the baby is tired, she will sleep early and the instances of waking up for feeding will reduce.

Babies 6-12 months have started recognizing faces, sounds and objects. Once a baby recognizes voices, some musical tones like lullabies will soothe her to sleep. At this point, you should minimize the amount of activity that the baby is involved in. This makes the baby relaxed and leaves her with the option of sleeping. It is important to use the same sleeping pattern for your baby to ensure they get used to it.

## Settling the Baby to Sleep

If the baby has shown signs that they are tired and needs to sleep, you should take them to bed immediately. The baby may start staring, rubbing their eyes and eventually crying. Continue soothing the baby with songs or sounds that they like and put them into the cot. Most babies 6-12 months like seeing someone they know close to them as they fall asleep. Stay with them and continue with a constant lullaby until they sleep. Cover them lightly ensuring that they are not too hot or cold to ensure their comfort. Note that babies 6-12 months with an ailment may sleep less or more depending on the ailment. They may also have several instances of wakeful nights. Soothing them accordingly comes handy.

## Chapter 4

# Sleep Guide for Babies 1-2 Years

### For how long should toddlers 1-2 years old sleep?

There is a big difference between getting enough sleep and getting quality sleep. Getting enough sleep means that your child was able to achieve the right amount of sleep required for their age. Quality sleep, on the other hand talks about whether your child feels comfortable the whole time that they are asleep.

Getting enough and quality sleep will help your child's growth and development physically and mentally. As your toddler grows up, the sleeping time reduces and they are involved in more activities throughout the day and sometimes at night.

Toddlers of 1-2 years will sleep for 12-14 hours a day. Due to the activities that they are engaged in daily, they will show signs of drowsiness and will achieve sleep easier. If the child had more naps during the day, they tend to stay awake at night where they engage in different activities on their own.

## Preparing Toddlers 1-2 Years to Sleep

In most cases, a child can get sleepy after feeding. So it is ideal to prepare them for a nap after they feed in the afternoon and at night. As a parent, you need to find a cue that shows when your child needs to sleep, e.g. rubbing the eyes, being irritable, or such.

Once your toddler is showing these signs of sleepiness, prepare them to sleep. Try some activities that don't require moving a lot like looking into picture books and listening to constant sounds or music.

## Settling the Baby to Sleep

If you have established a settling pattern that works for your child, continue with it. If you are planning to change the sleeping pattern, keep in mind that it may take long for your child to adapt to the new pattern so you need to be patient. Common ways of settling toddlers of 1-2 years include bath, cuddling, listening to songs. Ensure that you put your child into their cot while they are still awake so they will get used to the sleeping time and to their cot as well.

Patting the toddler slowly may help her fall asleep. You can do this by sitting on a chair beside their cot where they can see you close by. They will get used to this pattern and you can reduce the timing and frequency of patting them to sleep as time goes on. Make sure that they are comfortable in the cot – sheets are properly tucked into the sides and no other stuff inside the cot that might disrupt their sleeping like large toys.

As your child grows towards two years and they are used to the sleeping patterns, you can gradually adjust them so you will reduce the time that you have to soothe your child. Eventually, when they are ready to sleep, you can just soothe them a little and you can leave them to sleep. Toddlers of 1-2 years learn fast but changes should be gradual.

Sometimes, while getting into sleeping mode, your child might cry when they notice that you are not in the room with them. Separation anxiety gets the better of children and they may wake up and cry at night. They may also be having light period of sleep and a slight noise wakes them up. Discomfort such as teething and ear ache may also wake the child. Rocking your child in bed and gentle reassurance will assist your child back to sleep. Sometimes, the child needs the assurance that there is someone nearby and they will fall back to sleep immediately.

The next chapter talks about how to help your toddler cope with separation anxiety.

## Chapter 5

# Helping Your Child Cope with Separation Anxiety

Does your toddler have separation anxiety? Like when you walk out of the room for a while he will start crying, kicking and screaming?

Many parents also experienced what you're going through right now. Your child might be acting that way because for nine months, he stayed inside your tummy where it feels safe and warm. He has always been attached to you and being outside, in an unfamiliar environment, can make him feel scared and confused. As a mother, it is your duty to help them learn how to adjust with their new surroundings and get used to it.

Here are a few tips on how you can teach your child independence:

1. **Start out small.** Allow your child to play in the living room as you go to the next room (which has to be in eye view) to do a certain task such as folding clothes.

Make sure you are keeping eye contact with him. Speak in positive way and use reassuring words. The first time may not work, but just keep on trying it over and over until they get used with you being in the next room while he plays on the other one.

2. **Stretch the time being gone.** When dad or another caregiver comes home, go and take a shower or soak in a nice bubble bath. Reassure your baby that you will be back. Never sneak away from your child because this will leave a bad coping skill with him and think that you are never coming back.
3. **Wait for 15 to 20 minutes before showing your presence to the baby.** Hug your child and let him know that you missed him. Let him feel that even if you left his side, you will always get back to him. After you do this a few times and your child gets used to the idea of you being gone for that short span of time, try going to the store for a longer period of time.

You can continue to stretch each trip until you feel comfortable with the time you are being gone, for example if you are trying to build up to a night out of town with your significant other.

Taking things slowly will help your toddler overcome separation anxiety with much less tears and heartbreak and it will reduce your stress as well. Your baby will continue to grow his independence from you and will soon love his newly found freedom of spending playtime with dad, grandma or grandpa, and other relatives and friends.

If you think you are getting nowhere after a few trials, you can always ask for advice from your relatives and friends who have gone through the same situation. Talking or consulting with a professional might also be helpful for you.

## Chapter 6

# Sleep Guide for Toddlers 2-5 Years

Determining the ideal sleeping hours for your kids can be very challenging whether you are a new parent or an existing one. Unlike adults, toddlers cannot set themselves up for sleep so it's up on the parents to help them get the right amount of rest to guarantee a healthy lifestyle. Getting your kids to sleep more as required will also provide you with more time to do other household chores like preparing food for the family and doing the laundry.

### Documented Facts about Toddlers 2-5 Years

Toddlers 2-5 years require a total of between 11 and 14 hours of sleep time to avoid any anxiety or other related disorders that are closely linked to sleep deprivation. It is also critical to understand the common misconceptions that come with the sleeping methods for this age set.

Children should not be taken to bed when they are fully asleep but rather when they are drowsy. Doing this allows your kids to form a habit of going to sleep on their own when they feel sleepy. And letting them have a nap during the day, coupled with a good night time sleep will help them become less irritable and will provide them more energy to engage in many activities.

Down-time or Quiet time before sleeping time might be helpful for your kids to fall asleep on time. This down-time could include a light snack, taking a bath, putting on some warm clothes, talking to the child before he or she sleeps, ensuring that all is well and leaving them to sleep on their own.

During this period, turn off any form of entertainment such as the television, that might keep them awake. The room should also be at the right temperature and the lighting should not be too bright to make them more comfortable.

Sleep is a fundamental need that can aid in the well-being and development of toddlers and facilitate sharpness, memory and execution. Parents should look out for common concerns that prevent the kids to sleep properly and address them as soon as possible. These common sleeping problems include any school related issues, new siblings, any family concerns, children are more perceptive than we think and can often be anxious over something we did or said that never seemed significant to us.

Turning off the television or iPad before lights out mainly with children of ages 4-5 years can really help your child settle.

## Chapter 7

# Sleep Guide for Newborn Twins

Having a new baby can be a bundle of joy but it's even more wonderful to have twins! While that may be so, taking care of them can be quite demanding. What you may not know is that twins often have differing times of sleep, which can be very tricky if you haven't mastered the psychology behind it. But that shouldn't worry you at all and here are some tips to help get your newborn twins to sleep better.

### Other Combinations to Ideal Sleeping Guide for Twins

Before we discuss further, it is important to understand what the newborn twins require to be in the right routine of sleep. Feeding the babies at the same time can help them become drowsy at the same time. One good idea is to let them share a crib not only for the biological features they share but also because they tend to feel more comfortable and safer as they feel as if they are still in the womb.

Start with a bedtime routine. This sets a consistent time of when to sleep. Use a Feed-Bath-Feed routine and in their bedroom, use warm, low lights to calm them.

The most challenging scenario is when one baby is not ready for sleep and you have to make sure that the others sleep time is not disturbed, you can however decide to put them in bed at the same time regardless of their different sleep patterns. With time, both will find themselves sleeping and waking up at the same time.

If it's time to feed them and one baby is still sleeping, you can either feed the one that's already awake or wake the other sleeping baby and feed them both. If they are not in sync in regards to sleeping durations, you may have to switch to 'individual' baby routine where you treat each baby based on their various characteristics for a time.

Once again, try as much as possible to create a nighttime and day sleeping routine for your newborn babies. The cries of one baby may put the sleep needs of the other baby at risk and for this reason, ensure you play some games with them both, cuddle them, feed them and bath them at the same time. This creates a routine that they will most likely conform to.

Essentially, newborn babies should be trained into knowing the different time zones of day and night. What this means is that, if it is daytime, take them outside the house and let them sleep in different places. As the day progresses, they tend to get weary and sleepy, which is further encouraged by good feeding and bathing. The end result of this is uninterrupted sleep during the night hours.

Generally, having twins requires having a person to assist you either your partner or a relative. The idea is to take care of them as you perform other duties in the house. The ultimate goal is to let the twins share the presence of each other, create a similar sleeping pattern for both if possible, and you sleeping when they sleep to compensate for the time usually lost when attending to them. The main objective here is to try and train your babies into sleeping routines, which can be achieved by tracking their sleeping behaviors with a timer and putting them together to regulate their temperatures and bedtime cycles.

Make sure your newborn babies are feeding every few hours; and warm; as hunger and warmth can be the main reasons they wake up every now and then.

## Chapter 8

# Manage Toddler Sleep When New Baby Arrives

The arrival of a new brother or sister can be quite interesting for your toddler but it may also cause anxiety when your toddler worries about the shifting of attention from her to the new bundle of joy. This can also cause regression and sleep interruptions. Undeniably, parents need to be in high alert in terms of managing the two so as to avoid cases of sleeping disorders for the older child.

### Behaviors Associated with Sleepless Toddlers

Some of the psychological behaviors in this regard are such as temper tantrums, or regress which is further coupled with childish and retrogressive behavior where the older baby asks for baby items such as pacifiers and so on. This mostly come in the midst of attending to the newborn and can be quite annoying although it requires a lot of patience. The older baby may often wake up at every cry of the little one, sometimes because she thinks of helping the parent or at times as an opportunity to get the attention.

Owing to sleep deprivation that is bound to take place during the first months upon arrival of the newborn, the toddler is likely to lose a lot of naptime as a result of the reasons mentioned above. In that case, you can substitute her naptime during the day to compensate or engage her in lots of play during the day such that she will be extremely tired after playing; the cases of waking up in the middle of the night will then be minimal. Nevertheless, you can adjust her evening meal times to about 5-6 PM so that she can sleep earlier than the little baby.

Children are also likely to sleep well based on the treatment given to them before they sleep. Consequently, you can read a story to her as you nurse the other newborn to make her feel special in a way; a settled mindset can really encourage comfort, less anxiety, stress and therefore better sleep.

If your older child is co-sleeping with you, please don't kick her out of bed to make room for the new baby! Keep the baby in a bassinet near the bed, or in a co-sleeper sidecar adjacent to the bed, but don't add to the older child's feeling of dislocation. This will help your toddler sleep. Try to make the transition before the birth of a sibling. Do it at least 2-6 months before the birth.

The most vital thing to know about toddlers is to be consistent with discipline and the sleep time that you've set for them. And because you are busy with the other little one, you can make a time chart that you try to conform to and remind the older child constantly when it is time to sleep at least 45 minutes before. You can also let them read a story book in their bed to avoid cases of constant interruptions and have enough time to manage the little baby. Also make sure that your toddler is not engaged in a busy activity just before bedtime.

### Keynote in Regards to Toddlers

Good sleeping habits are helpful for developing the brain and preventing complicated health conditions such as obesity and anxiety. As explained further by the American Academy of Pediatrics, children who do not sleep enough do not concentrate well. What every parent needs to really understand is that do not give in to children's demands easily; the more they realize you are not giving in to them, the faster they get into the sleeping program you've set up for them.

## Chapter 9

# More Sleep Tips for New Parents

The joy of having your first baby is certainly special and worth celebrating for. With this new addition in the family, you and your partner's life will never be the same again, including your sleep routines.

Lack of sleep is one of the first things you would have to deal with as a new parent. Your baby's sleeping and eating schedules are not the same as adults and you will have to wake up a few times in one night for the first few months, just to feed your newborn or change the diapers.

If you are starting to feel overwhelmed, here are some tips that you can try out to help you get enough sleep as well as to maintain you and your partner's sanity and well-being:

### **Tip#1: Take Turns in Attending to Your Baby's Needs**

When your baby starts crying at night while you're sleeping, both of you will generally wake up, even if only one of you will actually get up and attend to your baby. However, in the first few weeks, you and your partner might get up each time your newborn cries and this will lead to lack of sleep for both of you. The best plan is to take turns in waking up and attending to your baby so both of you will have a chance to sleep a few more hours.

**Tip #2: Nap When Your Baby Naps**

Taking a nap while your baby is napping too will help you get some much needed sleep. Whether your baby naps in the morning, in the afternoon or early in the evening, you should try and get a little rest as well to help you gain back some energy and it will make you feel refreshed.

**Tip #3: Accept Help from Family and Friends**

It could be your parents, a sibling or a friend who's offering you some help in taking care of your baby. Allowing them to look after and entertain your baby even for just a couple of hours will help you get the sleep your body needs.

**Tip #4: Keep Your Baby in the Nursery Room**

Your baby should sleep in the nursery room and not in the same room as where you and your partner sleep. It can be tempting to put the crib just right beside your bed so it will be easier to reach them should he/she cries but remember, you and your partner will take turns in attending to your baby. If your baby is inside the room where you sleep, the one who's not supposed to get up yet will get disturbed and will not be able to sleep until the baby goes to sleep again.

**Tip #5: Feed Your Baby Before You Sleep**

If your baby has been asleep for many hours and it's already 11 in the evening and you're getting ready to go to bed, simply wake up your baby for feeding. Most babies will wake up during the night when they are hungry so if you feed your baby late, before you go to bed, it is likely that they will sleep until early morning or up to 6-7 hours. This will give you the chance to get more sleep as well.

# Need professional help?

Get the best practical sleep advice from  
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