



NEWBORN SLEEP

Firstly - Congratulations on your soon-to-be or new-to this-world little bundle of joy!!

A newborn can bring a whirlwind of emotions and, if it is your first baby, a massive change to life as you previously knew it!

With newborn's sleep being so neurologically immature, how can you get them to sleep well so they do not become a crying hot mess? Some newborns need very little assistance whilst some other newborns need a lot and generally you will know this very early in the piece. When your newborn is unhappy, they are very quick to tell you! If this is the position you find yourself in, there are different factors to consider and practices you can undertake to help your newborn find the happiness they, and you, so long for.

Avoid your little one becoming overtired at all costs.

A newborn that is overtired will be very fussy, often crying a lot and even though you know they are tired, your overtired newborn can be very difficult to get to sleep. It can also interfere with how well your little one will feed, which also adds to the difficulty of then getting them to sleep. Sounds terrible right?! So best practice – don't allow your little one to become overtired or at least do everything you can do to prevent it from happening.

But how...?

It is really important to watch your little one for tired signs and monitor how long they have been awake for. As they age, the amount of time they can be awake for increases.



Babies up to the age of 3 weeks only need approximately 45 minutes awake time.



From 3-6 weeks of age, the aim is 1 hour of awake time.



Once babies are 6 weeks old, the awake time increases to 1 hour and 15 minutes.



From 9 weeks of age, the aim is 1 hour and 30 minutes.



Do I need to follow a routine?

Anytime you talk about babies and sleep, someone will often talk about using a routine. Routines are great...BUT not for newborns. This is the quickest way to ensure you will end up with an overtired crying newborn. Just stick to awake times and you will have a much smoother start.

Once your little one is 9 weeks of age, you can choose to loosely start to implement a routine however awake times are still the most important factor.

My advice, hold off until your little one is 12 weeks of age before giving too much focus to a routine. At this age, neurologically newborns sleep is maturing and therefore a routine will actually help to support your baby's sleep rather than make it even more difficult.

So...How do I help my baby actually get to sleep?

Ideally, most parents would like their newborn to be able to settle easily to sleep in a bassinet or similar for most of the time. There is nothing wrong with this however some newborns will not agree!

To try to encourage mattress settling, your newborn needs to feel safe, warm and secure.

Firstly, use a swaddle to help replicate the tight feeling of the womb. Arms up swaddles can allow for a lot of arm movement and therefore will not prevent the startle reflex from occurring which can wake them up. To prevent this, an arms down swaddle is the better choice. Only have arms up swaddles or just prefer them? That's fine - any swaddle is better than none at all!

White noise helps to replicate the sounds babies hear in the womb so will elicit the calming reflex. Don't be afraid to have this nice and loud if your newborn is crying. Just make sure you turn it down once your newborn is asleep.

Sucking helps babies calm so allow this to occur however you choose, be it a dummy, breast etc. A newborn feeding to sleep is not an issue so do not be concerned about that.

Swaying, rocking or some other gentle rhythmic body movement is similar to the movement babies feel in the womb so helps to give them a feeling of comfort. Baby wearing is a great way to create this but still leave you with the ability to do other things.

If nothing you are doing is working, use whatever method you need to help your newborn achieve sleep. Don't worry – you won't create any bad habits. Newborns need sleep, a lot of it actually, so if you need to use the pram, car, rocker etc. there is nothing wrong with that as long as you are ensuring it is safe and are adhering to safety guidelines outlined by Red Nose.



I need some more help...PLEASE!

Some newborns need a lot of hands on assistance to achieve sleep and this can be very labour intensive for the parents. For some newborns, this just comes down to them needing some extra time to adjust to the outside world. It can be hard and tiring but generally if this is the reason, it will pass, but it doesn't mean you need to go through this alone.

I love to help support mothers and families with their babies sleep and can do this in many ways. If you feel you need some more information, some reassurance about what to expect and to troubleshoot any issues you may be having, I have created a Calm & Confident Newborn Sleep Program. This will walk you through development, settling strategies, feeding, environment and associations, reflux, wind, colic, bonding with your baby and so much more. If you would like to find out more, please click [here](#).

If you need somebody else to be your hands for a day, I offer in-home mother/baby support details of which you will find [here](#) or for a phone consultation to get a personalised plan created which will provide you with the solutions to help your current situation, you can get more information [here](#).

BUT...if you don't know what you need but just know that you need extra support, please book in for a [chat](#). Sometimes all we need is to share and just to be heard and I love speaking with mums to hear what is going on for them and their newborn.

Nicole xx



Silentnight
BABY SLEEP CONSULTANT

