

Shaken Baby Syndrome

Crying is the number one reason an infant is shaken. Shaken baby syndrome occurs when a frustrated parent or caregiver loses control and violently shakes a baby. The shaking may only last a few seconds, but it can cause severe brain damage, even death.

Why is Shaking Dangerous to a Baby?

- Larger head compared to body
- Fragile, undeveloped brain
- Drastic size and strength difference between victim and perpetrator

What Injuries Can Shaking Cause?

- Blindness
- Seizures
- Learning disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Death

Remember:

There may be times you get frustrated by your crying infant, but these feelings are normal and the crying will come to an end.

Never Shake a Baby

Our understanding of the patterns of early crying is based on years of research on normal infant development. The "Period of PURPLE Crying" concept was developed by Ronald G. Barr, MDCM, Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, and a member of the International Advisory Board to the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Along with others, his research has contributed to the recognition that these features of early crying, although frustrating to caregivers, are part of normal development.

"To reduce the temptation to shake a crying infant, we have to find ways for all caregivers to know that these features of crying, frustrating though they may be, are those of normal infants. We must all prevent shaking that changes a normal, crying infant into an injured one."

— Ronald G. Barr, MDCM, Pediatrician

For more information, contact:

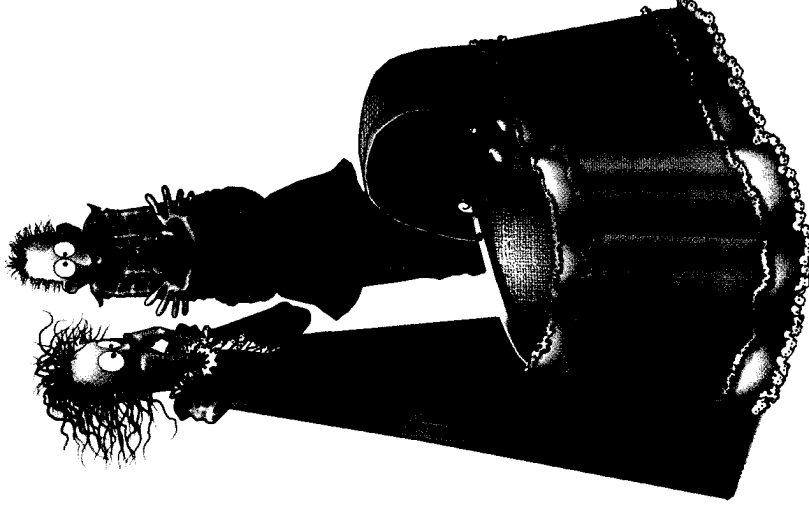
National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome
2955 Harrison Blvd. Suite #102
Ogden, Utah 84403
Phone (801) 627-3399
Fax (801) 627-3321
www.dontshake.com
mail@dontshake.com

National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

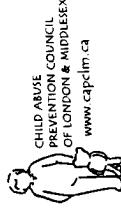
www.dontshake.org

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It is here ... The Period of **PURPLE** Crying™



You knew your baby would cry ...
but did you know it would
be like this?



The Period of **PURPLE** Crying

If babies cry, and as you may soon learn, crying can be very frustrating to parents.

A Understanding infant crying won't make your baby stop crying, but it can help you get through those first few months.

The Period of **PURPLE** Crying was developed as an easy way for parents to remember and understand the crying patterns of normal, healthy infants.

The letters in **PURPLE** stand for:

P **Peak Pattern** Crying peaks around 2 months of age and decreases after that

U **Unpredictable** Crying can come and go unexpectedly with no apparent reason

R **Resistant to Soothing** Crying continues despite soothing efforts of caregivers

P **Pain-like Face** Healthy, crying infants can look like they are in pain, though they may not be

L **Long Bouts** Crying can go on for 30-40 minutes and longer

E **Evening Cry** Crying occurs more in the afternoon and evening



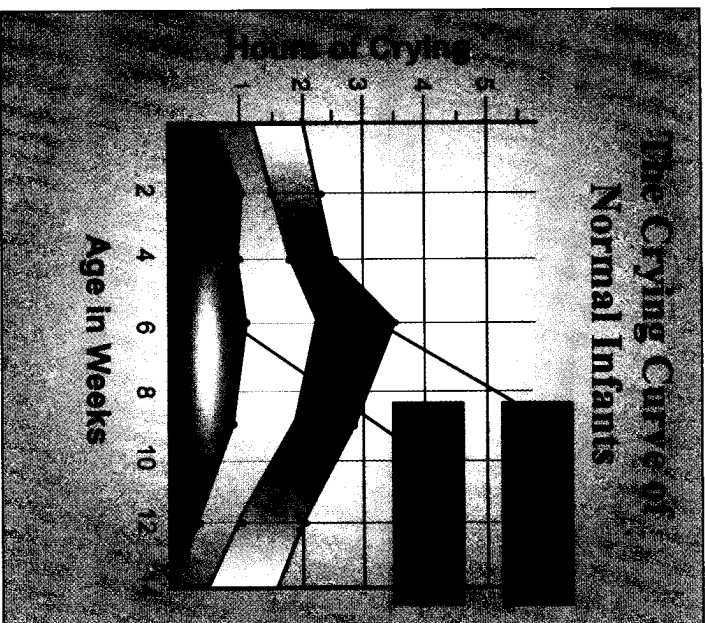
"My baby cried a little during the day, but in the evening, it was a completely different story. His cry was different. He sounded different. He looked different. And nothing worked to soothe him. We tried rocking, holding, feeding, driving, walking, singing, swinging, etc. What worked to calm him down one day, didn't work the next day. It was a very stressful time for all of us."

— Karen Coleman, Parent

Understanding Infant Crying

Even though you won't always understand why your baby is crying, you can understand the stages of her crying.

- Increased crying begins about 2 weeks of age
- Crying peaks during second month
- Crying decreases between third and fifth month



This graph shows that normal, healthy infants follow a similar crying pattern. Infants who cry less are on the bottom half of the crying curve and infants who cry more are on the top half of the curve, but all are normally developing infants.

Ask your health care provider for more information about crying

Why is Crying Frustrating?

It can be frustrating when you can't figure something out, or fix a problem. To many parents, not being able to comfort their crying baby is a problem they can't fix. You may try everything you can think of to quiet your baby, but in spite of your efforts, he may just keep crying.

Parents may feel like they are failing or that they are doing something wrong when they can't stop the crying. Crying can also be frustrating to parents for the following reasons:

- Your baby cries more than you expect
- Crying babies are not the fun experience you expected
- Social pressure to have a "good baby"
- Fear of being a bad parent
- Feelings of resentment toward your baby
- Fear of the crying never coming to an end

What it Does to You

Even the most kind and loving caregiver can feel frustrated by a crying baby. These feelings don't make you a bad parent or caregiver. Feeling frustrated is normal. If you feel yourself losing control, put the baby in a safe place, and take a moment to take care of yourself.

- Take a break from the sound
- Call a good friend
- Listen to some music
- Exercise
- Remind yourself the crying will end
- No matter how frustrated you get, never shake your baby

