



THE COLICKY BABY

A survival guide



Ask your pharmacist for specific
advice on your baby's colic.

This guide is provided as an educational tool to help
you cope and understand colic better.



What is all this crying?

When your baby is crying for hours on end with no apparent reason, it probably is colic. Colic is believed to be a deep-seated wind or cramp in a baby's intestine. It is one of the most common reasons for consulting a doctor and causes much anxiety, concern and frustration for the mother of the infant.

The signs of colic

- Does your baby cry non-stop for more than three hours a day?
- Does the crying occur at least three days a week?
- Does he normally cry at the same time of the day or night?
- Does your baby continue to cry after feeding?
- Does he clench his fists and draw his knees up towards his tummy?



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The Colic Specialist from Boehringer Ingelheim



When should I seek medical advice?

If your baby has a fever, seems ill or has an injury, seek the immediate help of your doctor. Visiting a doctor regularly may ease matters and is therapeutic for both the parents and their child. Keeping a diary of your baby's eating, crying, sleeping and stooling habits can also be helpful in identifying and eliminating possible causes.

Your baby will continue crying – whether you are there or not. Sometimes you need to give yourself a break. Colicky babies are very demanding and stressful. Don't be too proud or shy to ask for help. Arrange with family or friends to baby-sit for an hour or two and spend some time on your own or with your spouse.



Why my baby?

Nobody really knows what causes colic. Yet between ten and twenty percent of all babies suffer from colic. It is most likely to occur with first-born children and occurs equally in boys and girls. A common misconception is that colicky babies are unwell and fail to gain weight. The reality is that they are in good health and more often than not overweight. The reason is that parents tend to overfeed colicky babies in an attempt to stop them from crying.

There is also no evidence that colic interferes with parent-child bonding whatsoever.



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How can I soothe my baby?

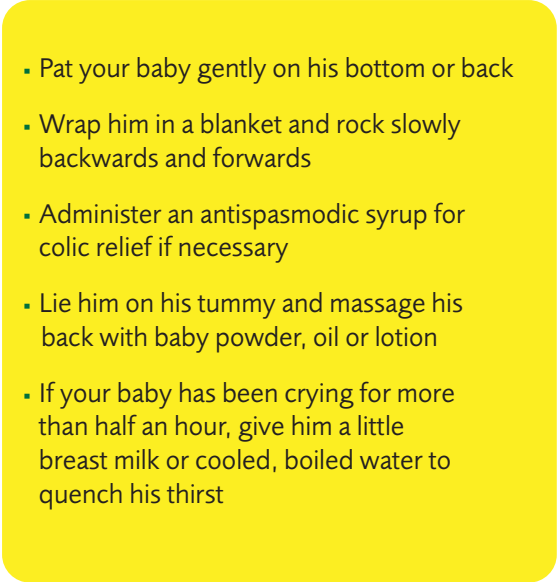
The first step is to eliminate any obvious reason for your baby's crying, such as a wet nappy, nappy rash or a slight temperature.

If everything appears to be fine, the following can help soothe your baby:

- Run a warm bath and rub his back and tummy with a lather of mild soap
- Hum or sing to your baby to calm him down
- Colic babies like to suck so give him an anatomical dummy

Will it ever stop?

The good news is that babies do outgrow colic. It typically starts within the baby's first months, peaks at one to two months and usually stops completely by the age of five to six months.

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- Pat your baby gently on his bottom or back
 - Wrap him in a blanket and rock slowly backwards and forwards
 - Administer an antispasmodic syrup for colic relief if necessary
 - Lie him on his tummy and massage his back with baby powder, oil or lotion
 - If your baby has been crying for more than half an hour, give him a little breast milk or cooled, boiled water to quench his thirst

Although the specific causes of colic are unknown, the following factors could worsen the crying:

- Overfeeding on formula or breast-milk
- Parental anxiety and tension
- Air swallowed during crying, feeding or sucking on fingers and toes
- Allergy to cow's milk

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