

american

baboy

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WHAT A SIGHT
HOW YOUR
BABY'S BLURRY
WORLD COMES
INTO FOCUS



**50 Best
Foods**
(Count 'em!)
for you &
your family



**MILESTONE
ANXIETY?**
SOME BABIES
WALK & TALK
LATER THAN
OTHERS—
That's OK



**Come On
Get Happy!**

WORK YOUR MOMMY MAGIC
TO KEEP BABY FROM CRYING

mommy magic

Once you find the soothing strategies that work for your crying baby, you can both relax.

I remember one night when my daughter Lily was just a month old and wouldn't stop crying. When nothing I did, her screams, I took a break from my efforts to soothe her and decided to do laundry. Walking in and out, Lily was on her last body suit. I whirled her basket to our laundry room and to bed, on the washing machine. Minutes later, Lily was quiet. I had no idea why "intention" to clothes changing had that effect, but I didn't care. I was willing to do laundry for the whole night should it stopped her piercing howl. And I know I'm not the only mom who's do anything to calm her fussy child. It's important to remember that crying is your baby's only way of communicating and is perfectly natural, but these tricks can be so comforting and varied, I bet they make you want to, well, cry. Luckily, there are plenty of random ways to calm your baby. And you don't need much more than his feet to rest. Here's how.

Sound

Keeping your baby's attention is as peaceful as a candlelit way so while a great way to quiet him, but loud sounds can be unsettling. That's because inside your belly, he heard everything from your voice to the gurgling noises of your digestive system. "Babies are soothed by the sounds they receive before their 'umbilical cord' when their eyes are not involved and they fall asleep," says Sandy Jones, coauthor of *Crying: New Crying Baby*.

Try this: Mimic the sounds your baby heard in utero. That means droning noises, such as a vacuum, an aquarium pump, a fan, or the white noise of a radio station gone off the air. "The noise needs to be as loud as your baby's crying to go. It is effective," explains Los Angeles pediatrician Christopher Tokker, MD. "Can you can tone it down as he relaxes?" How the white sounds are calming, too, so hold your baby close to your chest. Music can also be

By Michelle Bander
Photography by Alexandra Grablewski



settles down and drifts off to sleep. (Overstimulation is a bad becoming-overload effect—go hand in hand.)

Touch

Baby felt okay and safe during those nine months in your belly. What is why he also loves it when you tuckle and snuggle him. What's more, "during pregnancy, babies experience a lot of motion as their mother walks and moves around," Jones says. "Unless your baby is in pain, hungry, or overly overstimulated, motion can usually help him stop crying."

✔ **Try this:** Cuddling and holding your baby can provide the same close, cosseted feeling your little one had in utero. Add a gentle massage with a little baby oil one, two, or three times a day if the soothing isn't working for the baby.

Swaddling, which means that you wrap your baby tightly in a blanket, can reap the same results. First off, it can prevent a crying spell. But it can also keep a crying spell from turning into

helpful. "Whenever one of my daughters started crying on car trips, we'd pop in a Music Together CD, and the screaming would stop within minutes," says one out of three Jill Wilkerson, of New York City.

Your voice is also music to your baby's ear. "Babies have shown that the song titles of a month's voice begins to stress," says parenting expert Ann Hebbeler Murray, author of *The Secret of Nap*. "Because your voice is familiar, we'll find it soothing." Sing lullabies or do what Melissa Benson, of New York City, did. "I made up a song to the Harvey theme," says the mother of two. "Somehow that seemed to be very soothing."

Or you can try to "speak the baby's language," as Maggie Sheffield, with Artful Baby-sitting, in New York City, does when she's with a fussy newborn baby. "I gently hold him and follow his breathing pattern. Then I make soothing sounds that match the rhythm of his cries. He'll yell, I slow the tempo of my cooing, and the baby slows too."

Sight

Distractions help all of us forget our worries, and they can do the same for your little one. Anything from

Lucy faces to a change of environment can take her focus off what's bothering her. "Also, sometimes babies will cry because they're bored and need stimulation, like something new to look at," says Jon Kaufman, director of Baby Proofing in New York City, where the car seats and strollers are the most common and dad.

✔ **Try this:** Don't worry, your child doesn't need toys loaded with bells and whistles or to go out a special outing. Some experts suggest

As early as the first days after birth, a newborn baby will turn toward his mother's voice, even if someone else is holding or speaking to him.

slowly holding your baby up to your shoulder so she can look around from a fresh perspective. Or let her watch an overhead fan or mobile, or see her cat for a stroll.

On the other side of the coin, too much to look at may be your problem. "If you've tried everything and your baby is still miserable, she may be really be overstimulated," Kaufman explains. In this case, put her in her crib, close the lights, and let her cry a bit. Stay nearby, but wait about ten minutes. You may be pleasantly surprised when she

falls asleep. "The more frantically a baby cries, the harder it is for him to turn it down," Jones explains. "Cuddling his body can help the baby decompress himself."

Some parents react by hugging or rocking their baby, but a soft front carrier or taking him for a walk in the car. Others find more creative ways to soothe their babies. Judy Hoshino, a mother of three who lives in New York City, would sit on an exercise ball and bounce while singing. "The song wasn't as important as the bouncing,