



## Infant behavior cues

### How do I know what my baby needs?

All babies have behaviors that tell you what they need. Premature or sick babies do this, too. Watch for cues (signs) of what to do to help your baby grow and develop.

#### Cues that your baby is ready to interact with you:

- normal skin color
- looks relaxed
- arms and legs flexed or tucked
- hand touching his face
- hand to mouth or in mouth
- sucking
- looking at you
- smiling
- regular breathing rate
- if your baby is on a monitor, regular heartbeat

#### Signs of stress—cues that your baby is getting too much stimulation:

- hiccupping
- yawning
- looking away
- squirming
- frantic, disorganized activity
- arms and legs pushing away
- arms and legs limp and floppy
- skin color changes

### How can I help my baby?

- Avoid bright lights and loud noise.
- Use a soft, quiet voice when talking to your baby.
- Handle your baby slowly and smoothly.
- When moving or holding your baby, keep his arms and legs close to his body.
- Help your baby bring her hands close to her face.
- Help your baby maintain a relaxed, tucked position.
- Avoid too much stimulation or activity at one time.
- Let your baby sleep. Sleeping helps babies grow.

#### Special instructions

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#### Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any questions, please ask your doctor, nurse, or occupational therapist.

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