



NEWBORN

Newborn Sleep: What's Actually Normal

Adjusting to newborn sleep can be one of the most exhausting parts of early motherhood. This guide sets realistic expectations and helps you find peace in the chaos of sleep changes. Discover common patterns and important do's and don'ts to support your baby's sleep needs.

A free guide from maternity.app

Adjusting to newborn sleep can be one of the most exhausting parts of early motherhood. Understanding the biology behind infant sleep will help you set realistic expectations and find peace in the chaos.

Understand newborn sleep patterns.

- **Expect fragmented hours.** Newborns sleep 14–17 hours total per day, but it occurs in short bursts of 30 minutes to 3 hours across a 24-hour cycle.
- **Expect day-night confusion.** Newborns have no internal biological clock at birth, meaning they don't know the difference between noon and midnight.
- **Identify active sleep.** Infant sleep is noisy. Grunting, twitching, smiling, and rapid eye movements are normal and don't mean your baby is waking up.

Newborn Sleep Reality Checklist.

- ☐ Expect fragmented hours: Newborns sleep 14–17 hours total per day but in short bursts.
- ☐ Expect day-night confusion as newborns lack a circadian rhythm.
- ☐ Identify signs of active sleep; noisy sleep is normal.
- ☐ Support the airway: Always place your baby flat on their back on a firm mattress.
- ☐ Create a safe sleep environment by removing blankets and pillows.
- ☐ Wake your baby for feeds if they haven't awakened after 4 hours.
- ☐ Contact your pediatrician if your baby shows signs of respiratory distress.

What counts as normal temperature and behavior.

Many providers suggest that understanding your baby's sleep stages is crucial. Newborns do not produce their own melatonin because their pineal glands are still developing. They spend about 50% of their sleep in Active (REM) Sleep, where vital brain activity occurs.

TIP: SLEEP ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

Keep your baby's sleep area calm and quiet. This will help set the mood for longer sleep periods.

Remember, every baby is unique. Trust your instincts and reach out for support when you need it. You've got this!