

Getting to know your newborn

If you watch closely you may notice that your baby goes through what researchers call six distinct states of consciousness. Over a single day he may cycle through the states several times. Read below to know more.

Deep sleep : Your baby is lying quietly in a sound sleep. If you make a noise, he may stir slightly.

Light sleep : Your baby is still sleeping but moving around a little. If you make a noise, he may startle and wake.

Drowsiness : Your baby is just starting to wake up. His eyes are barely open, and he may yawn, stretch, or jerk his arms and legs.

Quiet alert : Your baby is wide awake but lying quietly. He is contentedly soaking up the sights and sounds around him.

Active alert : Your baby is alert and moving around more. During states 4 and 5 he is most responsive and ready to play.

Crying : Your baby is signalling that he needs something—a feeding, a diaper change. Maybe it's just a snuggle.

Keep in mind that after the first month, your baby will gradually settle into a more predictable routine for sleeping, eating, playing, and crying.

Answering his cries

When it comes to answering your baby's cries, trust your instincts. You may be surprised by how naturally you respond with just what he needs: holding, cuddling, rocking, feeding. No one is better equipped to provide these comforts than you. Remember that it's not possible to spoil a newborn with too much attention. If you respond promptly to his cries, you show him that his most basic needs will be met, and he'll cry less overall.

