

Some parents find that the **PURPLE** crying theory is a helpful way of looking at this.

The PURPLE crying period starts at about 2 weeks of age and can continue until 3-4 months. All babies will go through this period. The letters in PURPLE stand for:

- P** **Peak of crying** – baby might cry more each week, the most in month two, then less in months 3-5
- U** **Unexpected** – Crying comes and goes and you don't know why
- R** **Resists soothing** – Baby cries no matter what
- P** **Pain-like face** – Baby may look like they're in pain, even though they aren't
- L** **Long lasting** – Crying can last as much as 5 hours a day
- E** **Evening** – Crying typically starts in the evening or late afternoon

In short, we do not really know why babies go through this phase, but, like many other aspects of baby's development, it is a phase and will improve. The website purplecrying.info talks about this in more detail.

Although this period of crying is a normal part of most babies' development, if things are not improving as expected, or if they have other symptoms then a conversation with your health visitor may be useful.



Infant Feeding

Infant Feeding

All babies feed differently and all will have their different habits and patterns. This is why it's quite difficult to say what is normal. There are lots of common small problems with how babies feed that usually work themselves out in time without the need for any treatment. Below is an explanation of the main sorts of feeding problems and what they mean.

Reflux

When stomach contents go back up into the food pipe or throat we call it reflux. This is quite normal in all babies. Some babies will vomit it out and we call this 'possetting'. This again is quite normal, and some babies do this more than others.

It is usually quite difficult to say whether reflux is causing a baby discomfort. None of the treatments that are commonly used have much evidence behind them, that is to say, that scientific studies do not show whether they work well or not.

Usually we would only offer treatment for reflux where it is causing baby to be sick in a way that is causing a lot of distress to the baby or because they are not putting on weight. Otherwise, it is very common for babies to have reflux-like symptoms until they start to take more solid food.

Colic

The medical term 'colic' means the cramping pain you get when something in the tummy squeezes, like if you have an upset stomach from a bug.

In babies, however, it can mean many things, we use the term colic to describe babies that cry more than usual but have no medical cause for this.

None of these problems are due to one thing, and although colic drops and syrups are popular and widely used, there is no evidence that they help with any one of these symptoms.

One in six babies strain and this is nothing to do with constipation.

It is very common for babies to go through periods of being very unsettled and crying for long periods from about 4 to 12 weeks. If we are certain that there is not another cause for crying, then often we call this crying 'colic'.

We do not know why this happens, some people think it is baby getting used to the normal feelings of their tummies working; some people think it is their way of checking the strength of their parents' attachment to them ("they don't leave me even if I cry lots and lots").

We know that colic medicines have no effect on how much baby cries, but that there is nothing 'wrong' with babies who do this and eventually they stop on their own.

We know that as long as all of baby's needs are met – they are not hungry, wet, cold, tired or dirty – then it is ok for them to be allowed to cry and work things out for themselves

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