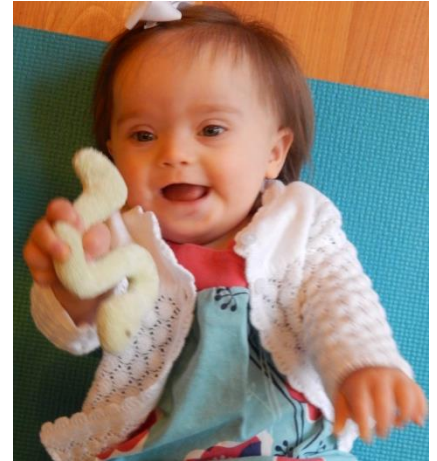


## Special Care for Infants with Special Needs

**Babies with special health care needs may be hard to comfort at times. The following suggestions may help in caring for your baby.**



### Provide a quiet, soothing environment:

Activity and/or noise may make the baby fussier or less alert.

To help this:

- ~ Place the crib in a quiet part of the house away from busy areas.
- ~ Keep walls relatively bare.
- ~ Use dim lighting.
- ~ Try introducing decorations and/or toys one at a time.
- ~ Soft music may be helpful.
- ~ Loud or startling noise should be avoided.

### Hold and position infants to comfort them, and help relax muscle tone:

- ~ Try wrapping the baby in a soft blanket so arms are against the chest and knees are bent comfortably.
- ~ Hold firmly and avoid quick movements.
- ~ Dress the baby in soft clothes, including mittens and socks to avoid skin irritation for a baby who is very active.
- ~ Check the baby's skin for signs of being too warm or too cool and adjust clothes and blankets as needed.

### Plan extra time for feeding:

- ~ Allow extra time to burp during and after feedings.
- ~ Avoid distractions (extra sounds and/or movements) during feeding.
- ~ Watch for problems with sucking and / or swallowing

**Discuss any feeding concerns with your baby's physician or nurse practitioner.**

## Learn what works best for your baby:

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- ~ As you get to know your baby, you will learn what works best for them.
- ~ Introduce new activities or objects slowly and one at a time.
- ~ If your baby seems relaxed, makes even brief eye contact or smiles, you may continue the activity or try more contact.
- ~ If your baby frowns, turns away, becomes agitated or tense, reduce or stop the activity until your baby calms down.

## To calm an upset, crying infant:

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Check whether the baby is hungry, wet or uncomfortable. Try different comfort measures such as:

- ~ Swaddling the baby
- ~ Giving a warm bath
- ~ Gentle massage
- ~ Using a pacifier
- ~ Carrying the baby in a soft front carrier or sling

## When nothing seems to work:

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There may be times when nothing seems to work. Have a plan for this. For instance:

- ~ Settle the baby safely in the crib and leave the room to relax and become calm again.
- ~ Call a friend or relative for relief.
- ~ Connect with Parent to Parent (360)715-0170 and your Helping Parent.\*

\*If you do not have a Helping Parent, you can call Parent to Parent and ask about a Parent Match. This can provide you one-to-one emotional and informational support from a trained parent of a child with special needs.

**Caring for a baby with special needs can be difficult and stressful at times. Remember to take care of yourself! Use whatever support is available from family and/or community resources and plan some time away from child care responsibilities.**

