

11 WAYS TO SOOTHE A FUSSY BABY

Babies fuss and parents comfort. That's a realistic fact of new family life. It helps to understand what calms a baby and why. Most calming techniques involve at least one of these four interactions:

- Rhythmic motion
- Soothing sounds
- Visual delights and distractions
- Close physical contact and touching

Calming techniques (except visual ones) are like re-inventing the womb that baby has been used to for nine months. Here are baby-calming techniques that we have found worked with our own fussy babies, and that we have been able to glean from experienced baby-calmer in our pediatric practice. Remember that your baby has individual needs. Try these techniques as a starting point and improvise. After a few months, you and your baby will have a large repertoire of fuss-busters that work.

8 MOTIONS THAT MELLOW

1. WEARING BABY IN A SLING

A baby carrier will be your most useful fuss- preventing tool. Infant development researchers who study baby-care practices in America and other cultures are unanimous in reporting: infants who are carried more cry less. In fact, research has shown that babies who are carried at least three hours a day cry forty percent less than infants who aren't carried as much. Over the years in pediatric practice, I have listened and watched veteran baby-calmer and heard a recurrent theme: "As long as I have my baby in my arms or on my body she's content." This observation led us to popularize the term "babywearing." "Wearing" means more than just picking up baby and putting him in a carrier when he fusses. It means carrying baby many hours a day before baby needs to fuss. This means the carrier you choose must be easy to use and versatile. (We have found the sling-type carrier to be the most conducive to babywearing. Baby becomes like part of your apparel, and you can easily wear your baby in a sling at least several hours a day.) Mothers who do this tell us: "My baby seems to forget to fuss." The sling is not only helpful for high-need babies it's essential. Here's why babywearing works:

The outside womb. Being nestled in the arms, against the chest, and near the parent's face gives baby the most soothing of all environments. Mother's walking motion "reminds" baby of the rhythm he enjoyed while in the womb. The sling encircles and contains the infant who would otherwise waste energy flinging his arms and legs around, randomly attempting to settle himself. The worn baby is only a breath away from his parent's voice, the familiar sound he has grown to associate with feeling good. Babies settle better in this "live" environment than they do when parked in swings or plastic infant seats.

Sights aplenty. Being up in arms gives baby a visual advantage. He now can have a wider view of his world. Up near adult eye level, there are more visual attractions to distract baby from fussing. The distressed infant can now pick from a wide array of ever-changing scenery—select what delights him, and shut out what disturbs him. And seen from such a secure perch, even the disturbing sights soon become interesting rather than frightening.

Instant replay. The expanding mind of a growing infant is like a video library containing thousands of tapes. These tapes record behavior patterns that baby has learned to anticipate as either soothing or disturbing. Babywearing mothers tell us: "As soon as I put on the sling, my baby's face lights up with delight, and he stops fussing." The scene of mother putting on the sling triggers a replay in baby's mind of all the pleasant memories she's experienced in mother's arms, and she can anticipate the pleasant interaction that is soon to follow. She stops fussing. She's no longer bored.

SUCKING ON THE MOVE. Sometimes motion alone won't calm a frantic baby; she needs an additional relaxation inducer. Settle baby in a carrier and, while walking or dancing, offer baby the breast, bottle, or pacifier. Motion and sucking are a winning combination that settles even the most upset baby.

Makes life easier for parents. Not only is babywearing good for the infant, it's good for the mother as well. The carrier gives you a comforting tool that usually works. After baby gets used to being worn and you get used to wearing baby, you have more options and more mobility. You'll feel as though you've gained an extra pair of hands, especially around the house, and you can go more places. Baby is content, since "home" to a tiny baby is being with mom, even though mom may be in the middle of a busy shopping center or at a party full of adults.

A baby who fusses less is more fun to be with, and drains less energy from the parents. Infants and parents can then direct the energy they would have wasted on managing a fussy baby into growing and interacting. That's why carried babies thrive—as do their parents.

Familiarity breeds contentment. Living in a carrier keeps infants content because it keeps them in constant contact with the familiar sounds, touches, movements, and visual delights of the parents. Being nestled in a familiar position is especially calming for the baby who is easily distracted and falls apart at the first sight of a strange person or place. The worn baby is

always surrounded by things he knows. From this secure homebase, the baby has less fear of the unfamiliar—and adjusts without a fuss.

Proximity fosters calmness. A baby who is worn is in mother's arms and literally right under her face. With this close proximity, mother can teach baby to cry "better." As soon as baby gives a hint that he is about to fuss, mother, because she is right there, can preempt the cry and keep it from escalating into an all-out fit. Being close to your baby helps you learn to read your baby's pre-cry signals so that you can intervene to meet baby's needs before he has to fuss. Baby in turn learns to be more at ease using non-crying modes of signaling since, during babywearing, he has learned that these signals receive an immediate nurturing response.

Babywearing and daycare. Carrie had a high-need baby who was content as long as he was in a sling, but she had to return to work when Evan was six-weeks-old. I wrote the following "prescription" to give to her daycare provider:

Rx. To keep Evan content: Wear him in the babysling at least three hours a day. -- William Sears, M.D.

How to wear your baby in a sling. Some mothers take to babywearing like a duck takes to water; others may initially find the sling awkward. Also, some babies at first have difficulty settling in the sling. Perhaps they find it too confining. For the best long-term results, get your baby used to being worn in the first week of life, so that she soon realizes that the sling is where she belongs. It takes some practice, but the sling will soon become your norm of infant care. Take lessons from veteran parents who have logged many miles wearing their babies in a sling in various carrying positions and in many circumstances. Find one of these experts to show you how to wear the sling so it's most comfortable for you and most settling for baby. Keep experimenting with various positions until you find one that works; the favorite position may change with baby's moods and motor development. Most high-need babies prefer to be carried in the forward-facing position.

For a busy parent of a fussy infant, a baby sling will be one of your most indispensable infant-care items. You won't get dressed without it.

Babywearing Story

"I thought for sure I would have a baby who slept through the night, in his crib, in his room, and that he would awake only to feed and to get his diaper changed. How naive! Jason knew what kind of parenting he needed right from the start. He was truly a fussy baby, and we nicknamed him "More." He screamed if I put him down even to get dressed. He seemed to nurse constantly, and he rarely slept. As long as he was in my arms or nestled on my husband's chest, he was content, happy, and alert. Any deviation from that was a disaster for everyone. A friend of mine recommended a baby sling so that I could have my hands free to do other things and so I wouldn't feel resentful of all the time a baby takes up. The sling was our savior! I loved carrying him, and it allowed me to get other things done. The sling ended the pass-the-baby-around sport that so many parents have accepted as just the way things are. There is no way Jason would have stood for being bounced around from person to person for an entire day. An added benefit of the sling was that he was able to nurse anywhere and everywhere while in the sling. We went everywhere with him—weddings, funerals, dinners, grocery shopping, doctor's visits and vacations. Christmas shopping with Jason in the sling was a breeze. I can't imagine how mothers maneuver strollers through the narrow aisles in most stores. Everywhere we went people remarked how wonderful my baby was. I always pointed out that since my child felt right and was getting his needs met, he really had no reason to be upset."

For instructions on how to use the sling, and more information on carrying babies, See

2. DANCING WITH YOUR BABY

It's only natural that movement calms fussy babies. Their whole uterine existence was a moving experience. Babies crave movement after birth because to them it is the norm. Being still disconcerts babies. They don't understand it and it frightens them. Movement relaxes them.

Watch a room full of veteran baby calmers and you will witness a wide variety of dance steps. Each parent has found the dance routine that best suits the mood of both partners, adult and infant. In fact, you can usually spot mothers of high-need babies in a crowd—even without their babies. They are the ones who are swaying back and forth all the time. A mother once told me that as she was standing at a party holding a glass of ginger ale, another mother came up and commented on the fact that she seemed to be teetering back and forth a bit. The observer concluded, "I know you haven't had too much to drink. You must have a baby!"

Our hobby as a couple is ballroom dancing, so this way of relaxing our babies, and us, came naturally. Baby calming by dancing is based on the physiologic principle called vestibular stimulation. There are three tiny balances located behind baby's ear called the vestibular system. These are set for three planes of movement: up and down, back and forth, and side to side. Dance steps that use all three of these movements stimulate the vestibular system best and are most likely to comfort baby. If babies could choreograph their own dance steps, the routines that contain movements in all three planes (up, down, side-to-side, back-and-forth) would be their favorites. (See and).

3. SWINGING BABY

Walk past any playground, peer into any nursery and you'll see happy babies swinging contentedly. The regular swinging

motion calms babies. To meet the high demands of fussy babies and frantic parents, infant-product manufacturers have introduced a variety of baby swings to the ever-growing market of baby-soothing devices. None of these synthetic substitutes work as well as the encircling arms, soft breasts and warm body of a parent, all of which remind baby of the womb. But let's face it, "wombs" wear out, and substitute arms are sometimes necessary to save a parent's sanity, or at least allow mother to take a shower.

Swings are particularly useful during happy hour, that stretch of time in the late afternoon to early evening when you're busy preparing or having dinner and babies are notoriously difficult. Try winding up your mechanical sub in order to wind down a fussy baby. The tick-tocking sound plus the monotonous motion will usually settle an upset baby. Some newer swings even oscillate in a circular motion rather than the traditional back and forth motion. It's best to borrow a swing or try one out on your baby at the store to avoid investing in something that your baby will shun. While some high-need babies won't settle for less than the highest tech swing (those that move in two planes, play lullabies, and have a plush seat), others will calm with a simpler swing that hangs from a door or porch frame. Some babies prefer these swings on ropes over the mechanical ones with their rigid supports; they like to sway in a circular motion rather than swinging from front to back. Some babies don't like any type of swing; perhaps they get dizzy. In that case, it's back to the human swing.

PARENT TIP

Mechanical swings are one of the most commonly recalled infant products. Be sure to buy a JPMA-approved swing. Beware of used swings or ones bought at second-hand stores that may not contain proper safety harnesses.

We warn parents against overusing mechanical swings. A high-need baby, if he doesn't reject the device outright, will tend to bond strongly to a swing if he's put in it routinely. It's especially important for the high-need baby to bond to people, rather things.

PARENT TIP

"My baby liked the trio of singing, slinging, and swinging. I would wear her facing out in the sling while swinging on a playground swing and singing to her."

4. FREEWAY FATHERING (or mothering!)

If you've tried several of the home-based tricks to settle baby and none have worked, take a ride. Place baby in a carseat and drive for at least twenty minutes, non-stop if you can. Then return home and carry the whole package (sleeping baby in the carseat) into your home.

I used freeway fathering at times to give Martha a much-needed baby break. Sometimes Martha and I would take a drive together for some couple communication time as our moving baby drifted off to sleep. Sometimes I would bring a pillow along, so after our baby fell asleep and we returned home, I would stretch out in the front seat for a bit of recharging.

"During one car ride my husband and I carried on an entire conversation to the tune of "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" so that our baby stayed happy and we could get some important communicating done."

5. STROLLING IN A CARRIAGE

For many modern mothers, wearing babies in carriers has replaced pushing them in carriages. Certainly babies would give two thumbs up to this improved mode of travel. While most babies settle better when worn than when wheeled, some high-need babies like a change of scenery and sometimes settle better in a carriage or stroller. Some infants shun the flimsy, hard, rough-riding collapsible strollers and prefer the old-fashioned, cushy, bouncy (expensive!) prams. That's typical of high-need children.

One day we were doing a video-shoot for the CD-ROM version of THE BABY BOOK. From my pediatric practice, I had gathered a group of parents and their babies as models for this weeklong project. (Bear in mind these were savvy parents and smart babies who had worked out a style of parenting that met everyone's needs.) The producers wanted to show a couple exercising together with their baby in a jogging stroller. The selective little creature that had been cast for this scene refused to go into the stroller. She looked up at her mother, peered at the strange stroller, and gave the photographers a look of "I'm no dummy. Why should I settle for that contraption when I can travel first-class on mom?" The cameramen got the point. They realized they'd have to put a plastic baby in the stroller if they really wanted that shot. Plastic in plastic. That made more sense.

Warning about babies sleeping in carriages. Carriages are designed to soothe babies and sometimes get them to sleep, but it is not safe to leave baby sleeping in a carriage unattended. Carriage mattresses are too plush, and carriages often hold blankets and fuzzy toys that may occlude baby's breathing. Many infants have been smothered while left sleeping unattended in baby carriages.

6. ROLLING BABY. Kneel on the floor and drape baby tummy-down over a beach ball. Hold baby with one hand and slightly roll the ball from side to side.

7. WALKING WITH BABY. One of the easiest baby—and parent—calmers is a simple walk. When our babies were fussy and obviously needed a change of scenery, I borrowed a motto from Knute Rockne, the famous Notre Dame football coach: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." I would nestle our baby in a sling and take a long walk, each time trying to vary the route and the attractions. We would walk past moving cars, moving people, trees, parks, children playing, up and down hills, around curvy paths, and oftentimes along the beach. Martha also enjoyed the walking routine. Sometimes we began the day with a baby walk, which seemed to start the day off better for both of us. Other times, when our babies were going through the stage when they fussed a lot around dinner time, we would take a walk around 5 o'clock, which sometimes mellowed them out enough that they would reward us by forgetting to fuss that evening. Besides calming fussy babies, long pleasant walks are good exercise for parents.

Get outdoors! We have always believed that if our babies were going to fuss they may as well fuss outside. Feeling housebound with a fussy baby is a double punishment that few parents can tolerate. This is especially true for those persistent p.m. fussers who need a half-hour to an hour each evening to blow off steam. In that case, they may as well have their evening blast amid a change of scenery for you.

Taking a walk is good therapy for a mother who is struggling with burnout. A mother who is having trouble managing her new life and who also has a high-need baby is at risk for serious post-partum depression or high levels of anxiety. This mother-baby pair needs to be out of the house, walking briskly for forty-five minutes to an hour in the morning and again after they have a nap. Mother may worry that she's away from the house and "not getting enough done," but remember, "home" to a baby is where mother is, and what she is doing is important. Walking will calm both mother and baby, and the exercise releases endorphins in the brain that soothe emotional and mental distress. Walking can help a new mother settle into a more balanced and peaceful life so that she can reflect balance and peace to her baby.

HAPPY HOUR

Many fussy or colicky babies seem to go to pieces in the late afternoon or early evening, just when your parental reserves are already drained. If your baby is a "p.m. fusser" around the same time each day, play "happy hour" before baby's colic hour occurs. Treat baby and yourself to a late afternoon nap. Upon awakening, go into a relaxing ritual, such as a twenty-minute baby massage, followed by a forty-minute walk carrying baby in a sling. With this before-colic ritual, baby is conditioned at the same time each day to expect an hour of comfort rather than an hour of pain.

8. COLIC CARRIES

Here are four time-tested holds for putting a tense baby in relaxed arms:

1. **The arm drape (also called the football hold).** Rest baby's head in the crook of your elbow; drape baby's stomach along your forearm and grasp the diaper area firmly. Your forearm will press against baby's tense abdomen. When baby's tense limbs dangle instead of stretch out, baby is beginning to relax. For variety, try reversing this position, with baby's cheek in the palm of your hand and her diaper area in the crook of your elbow.
2. **Colic curls.** Babies who tense their tummy and arch their back often settle in this position. Slide baby's back down your chest and encircle your arms under his bottom. Curl baby up, facing forward with his head and back resting against your chest. As an added gas reliever, try pumping baby's thighs in a bicycle motion. Or, try reversing the forward-facing position: baby's feet up against your chest as you hold him. In this position, you can maintain eye-to-eye contact with your baby.
3. **The handstand (beginning around age four months).** Let baby face forward with his back up against your chest as he stands on one of your hands. Lean slightly back to discourage baby from lunging forward and be ready to catch the lunger with the other hand in case he does. (You can press the other hand up against baby's abdomen if that warm pressure seems to help.) The combination of the visual attractions of facing forward plus the concentration needed for baby to maintain standing often cause baby to forget to fuss. The handstand also works well with baby resting against you chest-to-chest and his head peering over your shoulder; there's less chance of baby lurching forward out of your arms this way.
4. **The neck nestle.** Here's a high-touch baby calmer where dad shines. While walking, dancing, or lying with your baby on your chest, snuggle her head against the front of your neck and drape your chin over her head. Then hum or sing a low-pitched melody like "Old Man River" while swaying side to side. The vibration of your voice box and jaw against your baby's sensitive skull can often lull the tense baby right to sleep. Some of my most memorable moments are of holding my babies in the neck nestle position while singing the Sears family "Go to sleep" song: Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep my little baby. Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep my little girl.

For added comforting and sleep-inducing success, try the above holds while walking or dancing with your baby. Add soothing sounds and moving attractions, such as beaches, water running in the kitchen sink, or moving traffic.

9. 16 SOUNDS THAT SOOTHE

Along with motion, most babies are soothed by sounds, preferably ones that remind them of the womb. The most calming sounds are rhythmic, monotonous, low-pitched and humming in quality, with slowly rising crescendos and decrescendos, and a sound pattern that repeats at a rate of 60 to 70 pulses per minute. Infant product manufacturers have capitalized on research into soothing sounds by producing a variety of sleep-inducing sound makers that use "white noise"—a monotonous, repetitive sound involving all the frequencies audible to the human ear; this will lull an overloaded mind into sleep. However, you don't need to go out and buy a special tape or gadget to lull your baby to sleep. Here are some proven baby-calming favorites that you may have around the house.

1. A loudly ticking clock

2. Running or dripping water from a faucet or shower
3. The vacuum cleaner (wear baby in a sling while vacuuming). If baby likes the sound of the vacuum cleaner, you can save wear and tear on the machine by making a tape recording of the sound and playing the tape instead of running the vacuum. Some infants, however, get spooked at vacuum cleaner sounds.
4. Bathroom fan with light turned out
5. A fan or air conditioner
6. A metronome set at 60 beats per minute
7. Tape recordings of waterfalls or ocean waves
8. Place baby on floor in front of dishwasher.
9. Homemade lullabies : tape recordings of your own voice are especially helpful to soothe your baby when left in the care of a sub. Babies settle best with slowly rising and falling melodies with repetitive themes that gradually fade away. Pick a simple tune (for example, Frere Jacques) and make up simple words: Time for sleeping Time for sleeping Jason dear Jason dear Mommy's very tired Mommy's very tired Go to sleep Go to sleep. You can put Daddy in for Mommy's name in the next verse, or change another line in a small way. These variations can go on for a long time, and it takes no musical skill at all to create this kind of personal theme song for your baby.
10. Make a medley. Pick out songs on various tapes that baby likes (and you like) and using a duplicating tape recorder, make a tape containing a medley of favorite soothing tunes.
11. Music that mellows babies. While babies, like adults, have varied musical tastes, most babies settle best to music that is easy listening to your ears. Most babies like classical music with steady tempos and slow rise and fall dynamics, such as Mozart and Vivaldi. Many relax to quieter music such as classical guitar and flute. A music box playing Brahms' lullaby is a time-honored baby settler. Sometimes playing easy-listening music on the stereo all day long would help our babies have more relaxed days (us, too!) A tape player with an auto-reverse function is especially helpful to replay a favorite medley of tunes for an impatient baby who goes to pieces if he must wait for a parent to flip the tape. For frequent nightwakers, use a continuous-play tape recorder. Be sure to choose music that you like listening to, because you're going to hear it over and over again. In general, rock music or any music, which does not have an easily perceived melody, is too turbulent for babies and often aggravates an already tense baby. Other music that may be soothing to your baby includes the music you relaxed to during pregnancy and massage music available from your local massage instructor.
12. Tape recordings of baby's own cry, played at the onset of a fuss, can take baby by surprise and startled him into momentary silence, after which he may forget to fuss.
13. Echo baby's cry. One mother would echo the crying sound back to her baby when he began to cry uncontrollably. Do not do this in a mocking way.
14. The hum and slosh of a washing machine. One desperate mother secured her baby in a car seat and placed him on the floor next to the washing machine.
15. Vibrating to sounds. A desperate father came up with this fuss-buster: He wrapped his cordless shaver (with the cap left on) in a cloth diaper and laid it against baby's tummy. The vibration and the noise put baby to sleep; he would remove the shaver shortly after baby fell asleep. I have made a similar fuss- buster by wrapping a vibrating toothbrush in a diaper and placing it near baby.
16. Other voices. For novelty, sometimes babies are soothed by the songs of another caregiver.

10. 4 SIGHTS THAT DELIGHT

A captivating image can distract some babies in the midst of a crying fit and sidetrack others before they have a chance to howl. Try these:

1. **MAGIC MIRROR**
This scene has pulled our babies out of many crying jags. Hold the fussy baby in front of a mirror and let her witness her own drama. Place her hand or barefoot against its image on the mirror surface and watch the intrigued baby grow silent.
2. **HAPPY FACES:** spend a lot of time in face-to-face contact with your baby, showing baby exaggerated (but pleasant) facial expressions. Remember which facial expressions he likes and replay them later when he fusses. High-need babies demand a lot of connecting experiences, face-to-face and eye- to-eye contact is what they need in order to know they are being heard and seen clearly. All this connecting is why high-need babies grow up to be good communicators that are sensitive to the body language and nonverbal cues of others. They get plenty of practice.
3. **SILLY FACE:** Give baby a sudden change of face. Put on your silliest or most dramatic facial gestures and direct them at baby. These antics take babies by surprise, causing them (at least temporarily) to forget why they are fussing.
4. **MISCELLANEOUS MOVING ATTRACTIONS:** Seldom do you have to buy stuff to hush little babies. You'll be amazed what natural baby calmers are all around your home. We've enjoyed placing our babies in front of these natural "visual stimulators:"
 - o Ceiling lights or chandeliers
 - o The swinging pendulum of a grandfather clock
 - o A shower (put baby in an infant seat and let him watch you in the shower)
 - o Revolving ceiling fan
 - o Aquarium
 - o Running water
 - o Leaves on trees (place baby in front of a window or on the grass so she can gaze at the leaves swaying in the wind and their moving shadows on the grass).
 - o Moving cars; looking at cars zooming past the window
 - o Waves on the beach
 - o Oscillating metronome

- o Children playing
- o Pets playing
- o Fires in fireplaces
- o The changing images on television

The more interactions you try the better you become at comforting your baby and you'll have some fun along the way. One father tried everything until he discovered his baby would stop fussing when watching a popcorn popper in action.

11. 5 TOUCHES THAT RELAX

1. **INFANT MASSAGE** High-need babies have tense muscles that need help relaxing. Every baby needs lots of touching. High-need babies (of course!) need more. Infant massage is an enjoyable way to touch and soothe your infant. You can learn the art of infant massage from an infant massage instructor (ask your local childbirth instructor if she can recommend someone). An instructor can be especially helpful if your baby seems to be overstimulated by touch. You can also teach yourself using the instruction manual, *Infant Massage: A Handbook for Loving Parents* by Vimala Schneider (Bantam Books, 1989). Some very sensitive high-need babies actually pull away from being touched because they find it threatening or over-stimulating. In this case, a routine of careful, gentle touches can gradually accustom this baby to being handled and will help him to eventually enjoy touching.
2. **THE WARM FUZZY** Here's a high-touch soother where father can really shine. Dads, lie down and drape baby skin-to-skin over your chest, placing baby's ear over your heart. As baby senses the rhythm of your heartbeat plus the up-and-down motion of your breathing, you will feel the tense baby relax. His fists will uncurl and his limbs will dangle limply over your chest. By the time baby becomes three or four months of age, he may squirm and easily roll off your chest. Then try letting your baby nestle against you with the top of his head in your armpit and his tummy resting comfortably against the side of your chest. In this position, baby's ear can still hear your heart beat and sense your steady breathing. Pat his diapered bottom with your free hand to reinforce the calm feeling.
3. **NECK NESTLE** . Place the baby in the snuggle position and lift him up a bit until his head nestles into your neck and your neck and chin drape over baby's head. You will have found one of the most comforting and calming holding patterns. In the neck nestle dad has a slight edge over mom. Babies hear not only through their ears but also through the vibration of their skull bones. By placing baby's head against your voice box, in the front of your neck, and humming and singing to your baby, the slower, more easily felt vibrations of the lower-pitched male voice often lull baby right to sleep. As you rock and walk with your baby, sing a calming song such as "Old Man River."

Another attraction to the neck nestle is that baby feels the warming air from your nose on her scalp. (Experienced mothers have long known that sometimes-just breathing onto baby's head or face will calm her. They call this "magic breath.") My babies have enjoyed the neck nestle more than any of the other holding patterns, and I have, too. Dads, become a shareholder in the family art of babywearing.

4. **NESTLE NURSING** Undress your baby down to a diaper and lie down on the bed together. Curl up womb-like around your baby, face-to-face, tummy-to-tummy, and let the baby nurse. This is especially soothing if mom's clothing allows for lots of skin contact. The natural calming powers of touching, sucking, your breathing and heartbeat, along with gentle strokes from your fingers will relax even the fussiest baby and send her off into peaceful sleep. Martha calls this hold the teddy bear snuggle. .
5. **A WARM BATH TOGETHER** This one's for mother and baby. Mothers of high-need babies have put in a lot of hours of hydrotherapy because it works! Recline in a half-full tub, and have dad hand baby to you. If you are alone, have baby "stand by" in an infant seat right next to the tub until you are ready to bring her into the tub. Place baby tummy-to-tummy against your chest and let baby breastfeed in the water (your nipples being a couple inches above the surface). Baby is floating a bit while nursing, which adds to the soothing effect. Taking a bath with baby helps to relax mom as well as baby. Leave the faucet running and the tub's drain open a bit. The drip of the warm water not only provides a soothing sound, but also keeps the water comfortably warm.

Getting the sleeping baby out of the tub is a bit of a challenge. Some babies will stay asleep while they are handed off to someone waiting with a warm, dry towel. Most high-need babies don't sleep through handoffs, however. You may have to plan to just stay in the tub awhile. Have some relaxing music on that you can enjoy. Or have a book handy (this may or may not work depending on the design of your tub). If you really don't want to stay in the tub the whole time baby sleeps, and he doesn't hand off well to someone (or you're alone), plan your strategy for getting both of you out of the tub and resettled on your bed. Have the infant seat next to the tub with the warm, dry towel draped over it. (Try having a hot water bottle there keeping the towel warm until you're ready to place baby on the towel.) If baby wakes up during this transfer, don't despair. Wrap yourself up in your own big, fluffy bath sheet, pick baby up calmly and head for your bed. Snuggle up together with as little fuss as possible and baby may obligingly nurse back off to sleep for you.

A CHECKLIST OF 36 TIME-TESTED BABY-CALMERS

- Wearing baby in a sling
- Dancing with baby
- Swinging baby
- Car rides

- Pushing baby in a carriage
- Taking a walk
- Bouncing on a trampoline
- Nursing while walking with baby
- Draping baby over a beach ball
- Comfort sucking: nursing, pacifiers, sucking on the move
- Music, tapes of womb sounds, heartbeats
- Echo baby's cry
- Tape recordings of baby's own cries
- Tick-tock of clock or pendulum swing of grandfather clock
- Singing lullabies
- Vibrating, humming gadgets wrapped in diaper or blanket
- Running water
- Tape of environmental sounds
- Metronome
- Ceiling fan; bathroom fan
- Sounds of vacuum cleaner, dishwasher, washer-dryer, air conditioner
- Show baby your "silly face"
- Magic mirror
- Fire in fireplace
- Gazing at traffic
- Watching parent on exercise machine
- Watching television or video
- Infant massage
- Warm fuzzy
- Neck nestle
- Nestle nursing
- A warm bath together
- Colic carries
- Eliminating bothersome foods from mother's diet if breastfeeding, or changing formula
- Slowing down mother's lifestyle and changing her expectations
- Creating the most peaceful home environment.



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