

Pacifiers and Breastfeeding

Pacifiers are often used to calm a fussy or crying baby. An article in the July 18, 2001, issue of *JAMA* reports on the effect of pacifier use on breastfeeding. The authors found that pacifier use did not cause discontinuation of breastfeeding in the first 3 months, but that it may be a marker of breastfeeding difficulties or reduced motivation to breastfeed. Other methods of soothing an infant, such as breastfeeding, carrying, or rocking appeared to work as well as pacifiers.

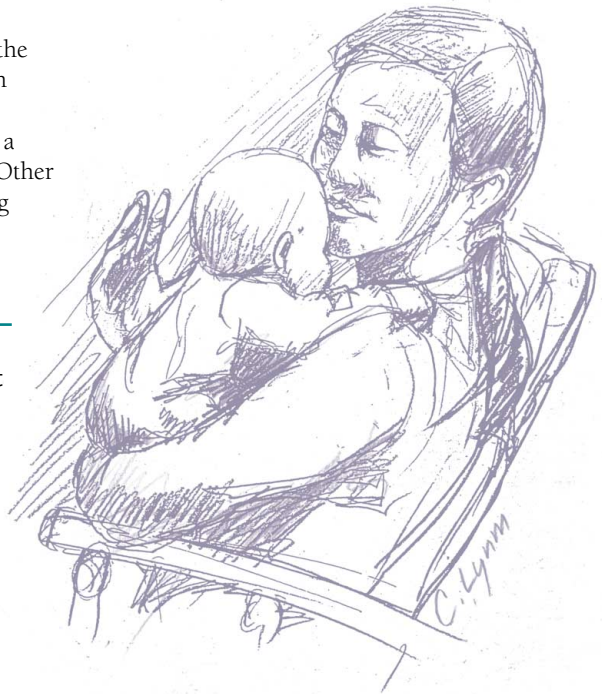
WAYS TO CALM A FUSSY BABY

- If your baby cries or fusses, try feeding your baby; if your baby does not want to feed, try carrying and rocking your baby; gentle, repetitive motion is often soothing to babies
- Play soft, soothing music; sing or hum and turn off the television; avoid loud or sudden noises
- Give your baby a warm bath and rhythmically stroke or massage his or her back, arms, and legs
- Point out bright, colorful drawings or toys

There may be a medical reason if your baby fusses and cries frequently. If you notice an increase in this behavior or if it becomes more intense, contact your doctor and have your baby checked.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE A PACIFIER

- Select a pacifier that is safe; choose a one-piece pacifier that has a soft nipple
- Choose a pacifier that is dishwasher safe; be sure to wash it thoroughly before you first use it and frequently thereafter
- Do not use the nipple of a baby bottle as a pacifier—if it is sucked too hard, the nipple can pop out of the ring and choke your baby
- Check your baby's pacifiers frequently for discoloration or cracks or tears in the rubber; replace damaged pacifiers immediately
- Do not use a pacifier to replace or delay meals; offer it only after or between feedings, when you are sure your baby is not hungry
- Do not use a pacifier to help your baby fall asleep unless closely supervised
- Never tie a pacifier to the crib or around your baby's neck; this is very dangerous and could result in serious injury or even death



FOR MORE INFORMATION

- American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

INFORM YOURSELF

To find this and previous JAMA Patient Pages, go to the Patient Page Index on JAMA's Web site at www.jama.com. Previous JAMA Patient Pages were published on breastfeeding (January 24/31, 2001, and March 1, 2000) and newborn care (September 22/29, 1999).

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