

Baby's Second Night

You've made it through your first 24 hours as a new mom. Maybe you have other children, but you are a new mom all over again ... and now it's your baby's second night.

All of a sudden, your little one realizes that he's no longer back in the warmth and comfort of your womb where he spent many months. He isn't hearing your comforting voice, heartbeat, and breathing. Instead, he's in an unfamiliar place with new noises, lights, sounds, and smells.

He has found his voice, though, and you may find that each time you put him to breast, he drifts off to sleep. But when you take him off the breast and put him in his bed, he gets fussy and starts rooting around, looking for you.

A lot of moms think their baby is fussy because he is not getting enough milk and is hungry. However, that is not the reason. Instead, the baby is suddenly aware that the most comforting place for him to be is at your breast. It's the closest to "home" he can get.

How can you help your baby settle down?

- When she drifts off to sleep at your breast after a good feed, break the suction and slide your nipple gently out of her mouth.
- Don't move her except to pillow her head more comfortably on your breast.
- Don't try and burp her; just snuggle with her until she falls into a deep sleep where she won't be disturbed by being moved.
- Babies go into a light sleep first and then in and out of light and deep sleep about every half hour or so. If she starts to root and act as though she wants to go back to the breast, let her. This is her way of settling and comforting.

How can your baby's hands help with fussiness?

- While in their mother's womb and after birth, babies suck on their fingers when they are disturbed or uncomfortable.
- Babies also use their hands to touch and feel and to guide them to the breast and latch on.
- Their touch on your breast will increase your oxytocin and prolactin hormone levels, which will help boost your milk supply.
- For these reasons, avoid putting mittens on the baby or wrapping his arms and hands in a tight blanket. Keeping his hands free allows him to soothe himself in a way he is used to.

By the way, fussiness might happen occasionally at home, too, particularly if you've changed his environment by going to the doctor, to church, to the mall, or to the grandparents! Don't be discouraged—sometimes babies just need some extra snuggling at the breast, because for the baby, the breast is "home."



Infant fussiness is typical on the second night of life



Babies feel comforted by their mother's heartbeat and body warmth