



April e-newsletter, 2009

Topic: Sleep Solutions

A good night's sleep is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. Sleep affects your feelings, mood, relationships, productivity and quality of life. Sleep researchers have found that the average adult should get 7-9 hours of sleep nightly for optimal health benefits...however, recent studies show that most adults only get about 6 hours. Pregnancy and parenting can eat away at those important hours of rest, so this month we will take a look at how to get a good night's sleep and how to make the most of the sleep you do get.

Pregnancy

During pregnancy the demands on your body are monumental! Your organs are required to work harder due to the increased blood volume and extra weight. As a result, you might notice that you tire more easily and require more sleep than you did before. However, once you are ready to settle in for the night, you have many things standing in the way of you and those precious hours of rejuvenation. Hunger, an inability to get comfortable as well as frequent trips to the bathroom are just a small sampling of the things causing you to count sheep!

If you are plagued by middle of the night tummy growls, chances are you are suffering from low blood sugar. Your best bet is to have a high protein snack just before hitting the sheets. Snacks like turkey and cheese, apple slices with natural nut butter, or some cottage cheese with sliced almonds will help keep your blood sugar in a healthy range until morning.

Once your tummy is satisfied and you are ready to snuggle in for the night, finding a comfortable position can be difficult as your waistline expands. Just remember that pillows are your friend! Find a comfortable side lying position and use lots of pillows to make a "mommy cocoon" and drift off to dreamland. Place a pillow under your head, under your belly, between your legs and behind your back so that every part of your body is fully supported and comfy. You can use regular bed pillows, a longer body pillow, or for a treat, invest in a pregnancy pillow specially designed to cradle your body (Boppy brand makes a good one)!

So there you are, pleasantly dreaming about your little bundle of joy and WHAM!, nature calls! Middle of the night potty trips can seriously disrupt your sleep time. After you lumber back from the bathroom, spend a couple of minutes doing some yoga cat-cow stretches (see resources section) before climbing back into your cocoon. This will lift your uterus off your bladder and allow for a little more expansion—buying you a few more minutes of slumber before your next ill-timed wake-up call.

Sleeping Post Pregnancy

Now that your little angel has arrived, will you ever get a full night's sleep again? The answer is YES! But how soon is another question. Some of the more common concerns I receive about post pregnancy sleep include; Where should everyone sleep? How do I get my baby to sleep through the night? And, how much sleep does my baby really need? Let's tackle these issues one at a time.

Where should everyone sleep? That is an easy one; everyone should sleep where they sleep the best. In the early weeks after birth, most babies do best near their mommies. Therefore, it is advised to keep your baby in the room with you. A bassinet, your bed, or a co-sleeper keeps your baby in close proximity for frequent night feedings and also provides you the ability to learn your baby's cues. Once your baby is sleeping well at night, you may want to consider moving them into their own room. Transitioning into a crib can be accomplished by starting the baby with naps in their room and gradually increasing the time spent there until they are spending all their sleep time in their crib.

How do I get my baby to sleep through the night? This is not quite as easy, but I do have a pretty simple strategy which should get you on the right path. Most newborn babies will take one longer stretch of sleep (about 4-6 hours) and lots of shorter naps in every 24 hour period. The trick is to get that longer stretch at night instead of during the day. To accomplish this it is important to make sure that your little one eats every 2-3 hours during the day. Each time your baby eats, note the time and make sure they eat again within 3 hours (yes, even if that means you have to wake them and stimulate them to eat). When you are ready to go to bed at night you will wake your baby once again and stimulate them to eat one last time. After that feeding you will both lay down to sleep. After a few weeks your baby will learn that is when to take the longest stretch of sleep and you should be able to get some un-interrupted shut eye for at least half the night.

How much sleep does my baby really need? From birth to three months, a baby should sleep 14 to 18 hours a day. From three to six months, a baby should sleep 14 to 16 hours a day. Six months to two years you are looking at 12 to 14 hours, and children two to five years of age typically sleep 10 to 12 hours a day. While these are just ranges, if you find your child falling *well* outside the range you will want to discuss it with your pediatrician. Too much sleep or too little sleep can often be symptoms of a greater problem.

Just a few more things to mention when it comes to sleeping after your baby arrives. In those early weeks, sleep can become a precious commodity. It is very important that you try to catch sleep whenever you can, "sleep when the baby sleeps" should become your mantra. Everything else can take a back seat to the rest that you and your body needs.

As for your baby, currently the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that you place your baby on a firm mattress free from loose blankets, soft bedding and stuffed animals. Place your baby on their back also helps reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Additionally, do not over

bundle your baby. A good rule of thumb is to dress your baby in one layer more than you are comfortable in.

Trouble getting your baby (or child) to go down at night?

For babies having issues transitioning to their own crib or going down at night without a big fight, here is one method you might want to try, it's called the "Gradual Parent Removal Method". In fact, you might have seen it on the TV show, "Super Nanny."

After you complete your baby's nighttime routine, place them in their crib. At this point they are may be howling and resisting going to sleep. Sit in a chair next to your baby's bed and wait there until he/she falls asleep. Do not look at them—stare off into a different direction. The idea is that you are "there" as a security blanket but not "available". If the baby cries, wait a few minutes then rub their head, assure them that they are okay and go back to sitting next to their crib (do not pick them up or take them out of the crib). Keep repeating this cycle until your baby eventually gets tired of resisting sleep and goes to sleep. Do this for two nights. On the third and fourth nights move your chair two feet away from the baby's bed. On the fifth and sixth nights you will be five feet away. By the seventh night, sit in the doorway, and on the ninth night, then in the hallway. Shortly after this, by the 10th night or by the end of the second week, the baby should be able to fall asleep by him/herself.

Still not sleeping through the Night?

What if your baby is past infancy and still likes to party all night? Encouraging your baby to sleep when you do can be a daunting task and the solutions will be as individual as every family. A recent study in the journal *Sleep* said that most behavioral intervention techniques work, but there's not enough information to recommend one over the other. What you decide will most likely come down to personal preference. Therefore, it's up to each parent to decide which approach feels right and works for your particular parenting style. Here are a couple tried and true methods that might just provide you with the sleep you need.

The Ferber Sleep Method: One of the best-known baby sleep training techniques is the Ferber sleep method, named after Richard Ferber, MD. Ferber is director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders at Children's Hospital Boston and author of *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems*.

On day one using the Ferber sleep method, put your baby to bed while he/she is still awake but tired and ready to sleep. Then leave the room. Your baby will most likely not fall asleep and will cry. Wait five minutes, and then re-enter your baby's room. Try to console your baby, but do not pick him/her up or stay for more than a short time -- about two or three minutes. The second time the baby cries, wait a little longer -- 10 minutes -- before re-entering the room to console. Again, do not pick the baby up or stay more than a short time. The third time the baby cries, wait 15 minutes before going into the room and offering the basic comfort used the first two times. Repeat the process as long as needed on the first night, waiting 15 minutes between intervals. Eventually, the baby will fall asleep on his own during



one of those time periods. If he awakens during the night after falling asleep, begin the routine again, starting with the minimum wait time for that day and working up to the maximum wait time.

On the second night, use the same procedure but start at 10 minutes for the first time interval. Then progress to 15 and then 20 minutes. For every night after, extend the intervals by five minutes. In time, the baby will learn to fall asleep on his own.

Parents wishing to try the Ferber sleep method should be well-rested before they start sleep training. That's because, in the early days especially, they will be spending a lot of time over the course of the night listening for their baby's cries, checking their watches and entering and exiting their baby's room.

The Scheduled Awakenings Method: This method seems to be counterproductive on the surface, but sticking to the guidelines will reap many benefits. With this method, observe and record your baby's natural waking times during the night for a week. You should notice a pattern of regular waking times. Following this schedule, wake the baby 15 minutes before each of those natural awakening times and soothe the baby back to sleep each time. The baby's "unscheduled" awakenings, those that don't follow the regular pattern, should gradually stop. At that point, over a period of weeks, cut back gradually on the number of times you wake your baby before his "scheduled" awakenings until he is able to sleep through the night.

Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

- Go to bed the same time every night, this will get your biological clock in sync.
- Develop a sleep ritual. Provide you and your child a predictable routine as you prepare for bed. A bath, a snack, a bedtime story and a massage prior to bed will signal wind down time and help prepare you for a restful night.
- No caffeine after 4:00 pm. Limiting your caffeine after lunch will reduce any unnecessary stimulation.
- Prepare your bedroom. For the best sleep environment your room should be quiet, dark, and cool (60-65 degrees Fahrenheit). You should also have a comfortable and supportive mattress.

So, there you have it! I hope that you have a wonderful month and that you get plenty of sleep!

Join us next month as we celebrate National Physical Fitness Month by discussing prenatal fitness, postpartum exercise and how to include your baby in your workout. Until then, sweet dreams!

Questions?

Contact Nurse Wendy!

AskNurseWendy@pacifiCord.com



RESOURCES

Destination Maternity– Has a great selection of pregnancy pillows. www.destinationmaternity.com

The Right Start– A wonderful place to find co-sleepers and other sleep safety products for baby— however note that Right Start (and Baby Style) have filed for Chapter 11 and may be going out of business soon. www.rightstart.com

The Children's Orchard– In our tight economy you can find awesome deals on pre-owned products for baby including gently used bassinets, co-sleepers and pillows. www.childrensorchar.com

The Ferber Method Demystified - Pediatrician Richard Ferber is the director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders at Children's Hospital in Boston. Since the publication of his book *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems* in 1985, he's become known as a leading — and controversial — expert on children's sleep. http://www.babycenter.com/0_the-ferber-method-demystified_7755.bc

EVENTS

Spring 2009 Fashion Show at Under My Umbrella, featuring local designers, activities and food.

Date: April 4th

Location: 1536 Newport Blvd. Costa Mesa, CA 92627

More info: (949) 631-4874 / <http://www.umu4kids.com/>

Saturday 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM Trunk Shows / 3:00 PM-4:00 PM 2009 Spring Fashion Show

Sunday 11:00 AM-3:00PM Meet the Easter Bunny/Easter Egg Hunt

* Every Tuesday at 11am is story time.

Childbirth Educators Association of Orange County Spring Conference

Dates: April 25, 2009 7:00-4:30

Location: Embassy Suites Anaheim-South

More info: www.ceaorangecounty.com

Baby Celebration LA

Dates: April 25 10am-6pm, April 26 11am-5pm.

Location: Los Angeles Convention Center

More info: <http://www.seascapeproductions.com/>

* Contact PacifiCord for free VIP tickets to this event!

March of Dimes, March for Babies Walk

Dates: April 26 / 8:30am

Location: Fashion Island (500 Newport Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660)



More info: (949) 263-1100 /

http://marchforbabies.org/wd_regp02.asp?si=&prefill=&rgst=&w=&g=&EditTeam=&pg=

La Leche League of Southern California (A Parenting and Healthcare Conference)

Dates: May 22-24, 2009

Location: Newport Beach Marriott Hotel and Spa

More info: www.lalecheleaguescnv.org

Free Prenatal Classes & Stem Cell Seminar

Did you know PacifiCord offers free prenatal classes and stem cell seminars each month? Click here for a full list of our classes and instructions on how to enroll.