

# Fact Sheet

**FACT SHEET 6.**  
(CHS\_FS\_GNA\_006)

## BREASTFEEDING (SLEEPY OR UNSETTLED BABY)

### Sleepy Baby

Some babies are affected by

- long labours,
- anaesthetics and other drugs given during labour, so they may be sleepy for long periods.

The first 72 hours are very important in the stimulation of lactation. Therefore, if your baby is too sleepy to accept the breast when offered, you will need to express your colostrum and offer this to your baby. If your baby continues to be sleepy and you are concerned, seek advice from your GP or breastfeeding training professional. It is recommended that your baby have a minimum of 6-8 or more breastfeeds in 24 hours.

### Unsettled Baby

Babies cry for many reasons. It is baby's most powerful means of communication. Babies cry with their whole bodies including their legs, so that the normal leg action of a baby is often misinterpreted as wind.

Normal behaviour is AT LEAST one unsettled period per day, it usually occurs in the evening but can happen at any time. Your baby will want to feed frequently and often seems to be snacking. This often causes mothers to be worried about their milk supply but it is rarely the cause of the problem. These frequent feeds 'put in the order' for the next day and should be welcomed as it will ensure your continued milk supply. Offering formula will upset this delicate balance.

### Tips

- The process of winding wakens baby into action for the rest of the feed, but you do not have to wait for a 'burp' before continuing the feed or settling baby to sleep.

### Remember

- Correct attachment, stimulation and frequent removal of milk from the breast ensures adequate milk supply.
- In time you will learn to recognise your baby's needs and the skills to comfort and settle your baby.
- You may need to adjust your expectations.
- Every baby is an individual.

Source: Breastfeeding booklet compiled by the Community Child Health Service of the Royal Children's Hospital and Health Service District.  
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