



Nap Happy

Many parents worry about napping – what if he sleeps too much/too little/ won't sleep at all? KUB asked experienced night nanny and sleep consultant Brenda Hart to answer some of your 'napping' questions.

How many naps a day should baby have?

Newborn babies will nap on and off all day. By six weeks, they'll have grown and developed and be awake more so are likely to nap three times – first thing in the morning, midday, and late afternoon.

By six months, they'll be down to two naps a day; then from a year on, this will drop to one longer nap, usually in the afternoon.

How many naps a day should baby have?

It depends on how old your baby is – young babies will have two to three short naps and one longer one, while older children may nap for an hour morning and afternoon. What's more important is understanding how much sleep your particular child needs and tailoring nap times to suit.

How do I know when it's nap time?

There are some classic signals that show he's ready to drop:

- ✦ Yawning a lot
- ✦ Rubbing his eyes
- ✦ Thumb or dummy sucking
- ✦ Asking to nurse or for a bottle
- ✦ Being less alert or slowing down
- ✦ Getting fussy and irritable

How can I get baby to nap for longer?

Good daytime naps start with a good routine:

- ✦ Put your child to sleep in the cot and ready him for his nap in the same way as you would for night time so he makes 'sleep' associations.
- ✦ Make sure he is comfortable, with a clean nappy, and that the room is the right temperature (between 16-18°C).
- ✦ Be positive and don't fuss – say good night and leave the room so he understands it's nap time.
- ✦ Don't worry if he cries a little. This can be a way of releasing stress and is part of the sleep process for some babies.

Should I wake him if he's napping for too long?

Babies need a certain amount of sleep a day – too little and they'll be overtired, which will have an impact on their night time routine, and too much and they won't be tired at all, which leads to its own set of night time problems. So yes, if he's napping too long, feel free to rouse him.

And remember, you know your baby best so try to learn his 'sleepy' signals, get him into a good routine and do what works for you. Sleep well!

For more information on Brenda the Nanny, visit <http://www.brendathenanny.co.uk>

