

## Common baby feeding issues

### Common feeding issues

Although it's natural to us, feeding can be difficult to get the hang of at first – remember, your baby's brand new to it. Still, sometimes there can be medical reasons behind feeding problems that can affect your baby's appetite or the way in which they absorb food and vital nutrients. While crying is your baby's way of telling you they're hungry, crying after feeding may mean trapped wind, and prolonged crying could be due to colic. Possetting is also a fairly common problem in many young babies and nothing to worry about in the majority of cases, however, regular vomiting and weight loss are more serious issues that will require support from your doctor.

### Colic

The symptoms of colic include a flushed face, clenched fists, and legs pulled up to the chest with 2–3 hour spells of loud, often high pitched crying on most days of the week, often during the early evening. It tends to start in the first few weeks but usually disappears by around 3-4 months. Colic is very common – up to one in four young babies suffer from it.

### Crying before feeding

Usually, a baby that cries before feeding is simply telling you they're hungry. Some mums say that this type of cry is recognisably different to other crying. Although it may all sound the same to you now, you'll soon learn to identify the reason your baby is crying as you get to know them.

### Crying after feeding

If your baby is crying after their feed it's likely to be colic or wind. Winding your baby properly after every feed may help. If it doesn't and your baby still seems distressed, your health visitor should be able to offer some advice, or give our team of experts a call on **08457 623 628** between 8am and 8pm, Monday to Friday.

### Poor weight gain

Most newborn babies lose a little weight straight after birth, but they should soon begin to put weight on if they are feeding correctly. Since your newborn's stomach is quite small, they will initially need feeding every two to three hours. But all babies are different, and there's no ideal amount or rate at which they should gain weight. Your health visitor will monitor your baby's weight gain, and if there's any cause for concern they'll let you know.

### Possetting

Possetting and regurgitation are terms used to refer to the little bit of milk a baby brings up after feeding. Although it's natural, if your baby is possetting regularly – more than 4 times a day - and they're bringing up more than just a little bit of feed, they may have reflux. Your health visitor is the best person to speak to if you suspect your baby is possetting too much.

## **Vomiting**

Vomiting is when your baby brings their entire feed back up. It's different to the effortless and gentle action of possetting, which tends to happen immediately after a feed. Vomiting happens a little longer afterwards, is a more forceful action and larger volume, and often smells unpleasant. If your baby is over 3 months and it's an isolated case of vomiting with no other symptoms, giving them some cooled freshly boiled water will help top up their fluids again. You should contact your doctor if your baby is vomiting regularly, if it's a large amount, if you ever notice blood in their vomit, if they also have diarrhoea or if they're younger than 3 months.

## **Diarrhoea**

Diarrhoea is usually caused by either a bug or a feeding issue – if you're at all worried about it, the best person to speak to is your health visitor or doctor.

## **Medical problems**

If your baby has a cold or is feeling poorly for some other reason, it can put them off their food just as it would us. For example, a blocked-up nose can make it difficult to breathe and leave your baby reluctant to close their mouth to feed. If this happens, ask your health visitor for ways to safely relieve your baby's congestion.

## **Food allergies and intolerances**

Food allergies and intolerances can be another explanation for weight loss or difficulty in feeding – it's always worth getting your baby checked out by your doctor if you suspect there's something wrong.

If you have any questions about feeding your baby, give our expert feeding advisors a call on **08457 623 628**. Or chat to us online via our instant messaging service, Live Chat, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm.