

How to Tune in to your New Baby

Factsheet 2

Congratulations! Having a baby is such an exciting time but there can be a lot of pressure to know what your baby is 'saying'. It takes time to learn who your baby is and how they communicate, and we've created this factsheet to give you some ideas of what to look for. If you still have any further questions, do email us at EBBSinfo@gmail.com.



What Newborn Babies Can Do

A Healthy Newborn Baby (born from 37+ weeks onwards) can often:

- Use all their senses
- Visually track objects or faces
- Hear and locate sounds
- Habituate to sound and light
- Recognise the mother (and often fathers) voice and mother's smell
- Discriminate mother's face from stranger
- Recognise emotional expressions and will look significantly more at a face with a direct gaze than at an averted gaze.

What babies are trying to do is:

- Make meaning of the world
- Learn from relationships about emotional states – theirs and others
- Understanding others minds
- Learning about familiar people around them
- Learning to self-regulate, which aids physical and emotional growth.

Babies can show that they are stressed and need extra support through the following:

- Spit up and vomiting
- Wind and bowel movements
- Trembles
- Changing colour and mottling
- Yawns
- Sneezes
- Hiccups (can be a sign of overstimulation)
- Averting their gaze or looking away
- Moving to a lower state (e.g. moving from deep to light sleep).

Babies are also born with the ability to self-soothe. Sometimes they do this through:

- Holding hands to chest/ midline
- Bringing hands near face
- Sucking hands or fingers

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How you can learn more about your baby

You will learn a lot through health professionals and people around you who are used to babies, including other friends and family. We run a [private Facebook group](#) where you are welcome to ask questions and will receive online support from the whole community. You can also email our inbox – ebbsinfo@gmail.com.

It is important to remember, however, that while there are some things that all babies can do, your baby is an individual and will have their own unique ways of communicating and showing you what they need and want. YOU are the expert on YOUR baby.

Some ideas that can help you learn more about your particular baby's cues are:

1. Slow down: Make time to hang out with your baby. Babies response times are much slower than adults so you need to slow down in order to make sure you don't miss something.
2. Remember that your baby's preferences are unique to them. Some babies are more interested in people and some are more interested in 'things', some babies find it easy to sleep through noise and some find it harder. This is all useful information.
3. Learn your baby's 'voice': Some babies communicate very clearly and some take a bit more listening to. If you have a baby who has more subtle cues (i.e. they don't have an obvious feeding cue) then knowing this means you are less likely to miss it.

One of our members, Sarah Wheatley at [Birth and Beyond](#), has been trained by the Brazelton Institute UK to carry out Newborn Behavioural Observations which are recommended in the National Health Visiting Service Specification, 2015/16 NHS England and proven to help parents feel more confident in knowing what their babies are communicating.

If you have any further questions do get in touch or visit our website –

<http://www.edinburghbirthandbaby.com>

