

# OPTIMIZING SLEEP CHECKLIST

BIRTH BABY SLEEP

## Introduction

While the needs of every child can vary greatly, there are some fairly universal milestones and considerations to take into account that can go a long way to helping them all sleep their best.

The following list outlines what to look for that could be impacting your little one's sleep needs.

*The key to healthy sleep for children is to know what they are (and are not) developmentally capable of.*

### CHILD

- Developmentally ready (adjusted age)
- Absence of cold/flu symptoms
- Growing and gaining weight well/as expected

### SAFETY

- Position - placing babies on their backs to sleep (under 1 year of age)
- Clothing: sleep sack, swaddle or blanket?
- Sleeping space - ideally their own space, free from hazards

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## ENVIRONMENT

- Consistent sleeping space - bassinet, crib, cradle, or bed
- Room temperature (18-22° Celsius)
- Darkness level
- Noise level

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Hunger
- Dirty diaper
- Undiagnosed allergy or physical issue



## KEYS TO HEALTHY SLEEP

- ✓ Learn and follow your child's sleep needs
- ✓ Provide a consistent, safe sleeping space if you can
- ✓ Implement a soothing pre-sleep routine
- ✓ Help them learn some age-appropriate independent sleep skills if desired/necessary

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## The Details

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| CHILD       | <p>If your baby was born more than 2 weeks before their due date, it's usually best to use their expected due date to calculate their "adjusted age." This helps determine when they may be ready to reach certain milestones, including sleep ones.</p> <p>Babies should be "healthy" for all intents and purposes when it comes to expecting them to sleep their best. Ensure they are gaining weight as needed for proper growth and development before cutting out any potentially necessary feedings.</p>   |
| SAFETY      | <p>Any time you, as the parent/caregiver expect to also be sleeping, your baby should always be placed on his/her back to sleep until they are at least 1 year of age.</p> <p>A safe sleeping space, such as a crib, cradle, bassinet or bed (for bigger kids) should be away from any hazards such as window coverings, cords or the like.</p> <p>For babies &lt;1 year of age, all they need is a firm mattress with a fitted sheet in their space, along with a sleep sack or swaddle for safety and warmth while sleeping.</p>   |
| ENVIRONMENT | <p>After about 4-5 months of age, many babies tend to sleep better in a regular space, such as their crib or toddler bed for most of their naps/night sleep.</p> <p>Sleeping in cooler temperatures is not only recommended for safe sleeping but also for creating a conducive sleep environment.</p> <p>Darkness helps the body to produce melatonin, the sleep hormone. Try keeping the room dark in the evenings and overnight to signify that nighttime is sleep-time.</p> <p>White noise can be a great addition to any baby's sleep environment, especially for young infants or if there are other outside noises that could wake them up.</p> |
| OTHER       | <p>Keep Baby well-fed during the day and check with the doc before cutting out any overnight feeds.</p> <p>If dirty diapers are the culprit for waking prematurely, try adjusting when you offer higher fiber foods so those BMs can happen at other times of day.</p> <p>Check with your doctor and possibly also a sleep consultant, chiropractor, or osteopath specializing in the little ones. Sometimes things like tension, overtiredness, enlarged tonsils or adenoids can be the culprit to poor sleep,</p>  |