

Daily Activities

The feed, play and sleep cycle is the core structure of your baby's day.



0 - 6 Months

What to expect from your baby at 0 - 3 months

Newborns feed at a range of intervals on average 2 - 5 hourly but of course this can vary between babies and their individual needs and how your breastmilk supply is going (for example some babies may cluster feed in the late afternoon to early evening). Newborns generally need at least 6 - 8 feeds in 24 hours. It's very normal that a newborn will not have a set daily routine for feeding times (this is especially important if you are breastfeeding); this daily routine or pattern emerges as they mature. By 4 - 6 weeks of age most babies have their internal clock for day and night set. Once they have this day and night clock set then they can start to develop better rhythms between sleep wake cycles with your help and they're likely to start sleeping for longer periods. From birth sleep cycles are generally 40 - 50 minutes long.

For example a 3 month old may (depending on the individual child):

- Feed-play and sleep every 2 - 4 hours and join one to two sleep cycles in the day time sometimes
- Know and respond to their bedtime routine of responding to tired signs with a nappy check/change, wrapping/sleeping bag, and singing and comfort to a calm state
- Be sleeping longer in the night but still wake over night for feeds

Sleep times

Sleep times can vary with your baby. They may be able to sleep through the sleep cycle and learn to sleep longer each time, or need your help to return to sleep.

As your baby matures, wake time during the day increases and night sleeps lengthen. Some days may go smoothly, other days your baby may need you more and things don't go as planned.

This is part of your baby's normal transition to their new life, where they:

- Get to know you
- Adapt to their changing world
- Learn day and night and the feed-play-sleep pattern

See the *Tresillian Tip Sheet "Normal Newborn Crying"*.

Things that may interrupt all this learning include:

- Illness
- Changes in family environments
- Extra busy days

If you are concerned about your baby, visit your local

Early Childhood Nurse or GP or call Tresillian's Parent's Help Line for advice from a Tresillian Nurse free of charge.

TO BE USED AS A GUIDE ONLY

	Daily Activities 0-6 Months
FEED	Early Morning (After 5am) Milk feed May return to sleep OR get up to start the day
SLEEP	Responding to your baby's tired cues > SLEEP
FEED PLAY	Mid morning Milk feed Play Average awake time 1 - 2½ hrs (this includes time taken to feed and play; be guided by your baby's cues)
SLEEP	Responding to your baby's tired cues > SLEEP
FEED PLAY	Lunchtime Milk feed Play Average awake time 1 - 2½ hrs (this includes time taken to feed and play; be guided by your baby's cues)
SLEEP	Responding to your baby's tired cues > SLEEP
FEED PLAY	Mid afternoon Milk feed Play Average awake time 1 - 2½ hrs (this includes time taken to feed and play; be guided by your baby's cues)
SLEEP	Responding to your baby's tired cues > SLEEP May only require a short nap
FEED QUIET TIME	Evening Milk feed Bath Quiet time Cuddle
SLEEP	Settle for night > SLEEP Baby will still wake for feeds overnight



Baby's individual activity Plan

What to expect from your baby at 3-6 months

As your baby gets older they may still wake overnight but may not always need a feed; they might need you to help them learn how to join sleep cycles without a feed straight away or be practicing a new skill they have learnt (like how to socialise or roll over) or need connection time with you.

Nightwaking is still normal at this age and babies are not expected to sleep through the night for long periods until after 6 months. All babies develop differently and most babies will still wake for a feed over night until 12 months. They are sleeping for longer periods but will still need in general 2 - 3 feeds a night and help to resettle at times. As your baby matures, wake times during the day will increase. For example a newborn might only stay awake and calm for an hour and this includes feeding and a quick face to face playtime while some 6 month olds can manage to feed quite quickly and then play for a around 2 hours before they start to get grizzly and need a sleep.

At 6 months night-time sleeps can be up to 6 hours long for some babies in the beginning of the night. It is still very normal for your 6 month old baby to stir at least 3 times during the night and will possibly need to be re-settled. Some may still wake for a feed.

Sleep times can vary, but now they usually sleep through the sleep cycle and sleep longer each time. After 3 months most babies will change to about 3 sleeps each day.

There's lots of ways to build a relationship with your baby during awake/play times including:

What my baby likes

- Supervised floor play with baby on their tummy; teach your baby to roll over
- Use colourful raffles and soft toys to encourage interaction
- Take baby for a walk in the pram
- Read stories
- Sing songs or play music
- Play hand games such as 'ring a rosie'
- Visit friends

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Some ideas for quiet times include:

What my baby likes

- Reading a book - using the same story to create an association with sleep
- Sing a special song
- Give baby a relaxation bath or baby massage

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Our friendly team at Tresillian are here to support your family!

Book a visit to Tresillian:

Visit tresillian.org.au, fill in the short online contact form and one of our Nurses will call you back



Ask your local Health Professional, Child & Family Health Nurse, GP or early parenting support service to refer you and your child



Tresillian Parent's Help Line
FREECALL 1300 272 736

In Tasmania
FREECALL 1300 827 282
1300 TAS BUB



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Acknowledgement of Country

Tresillian acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as the First Peoples of Australia, the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land in the countries on which we live and work in NSW, the ACT and TAS. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the communities we serve.

