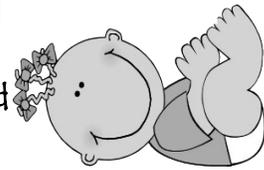


## Prevent Baby Meltdown by understanding baby sleep cycles

One minute Baby is all smiles, babbling and cooing at mommy and daddy....



The next minute....what happened? Baby is on the way to a total meltdown!  
IT'S BAFFLING!

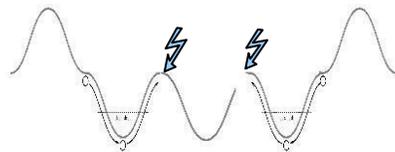


What's happened is that he has suddenly gone past *wanting to go to sleep* to being *unable to go to sleep*, and he is going to vocalize about it until his next sleep window opens, which could be anywhere from 45 minutes to 90 minutes, depending on his age. The reason for this is.... the biological sleep window clock! All humans have an internal clock that tells us when it's time to sleep. Your baby's clock is immature and until Baby is about 4 months old, you are in charge of being the timekeeper. When you watch for the sleep-window to open and you get Baby down to sleep At That Moment, he will slide *peacefully into sleep*. Ahh, but if you don't? Meltdown Ahead!

### Baby's sleep window clock matures over the first 16 weeks.

Babies from birth to about 2 weeks (adjust for prematurity) sleep most of the time and their sleep cycles are about 30 minutes. That is: 30 minutes awake, then 5 consecutive 30-minute sleep cycles till next feeding.

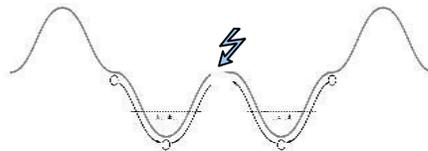
#### 2-3 weeks through 8-10 weeks



⚡ Baby will come all the way out of sleep when she hits the lightest part of her sleep cycle but she is not really finished sleeping!

Awake cycle is 45 minutes. Baby will be in alert phase for 45 minutes and at the end of that alert time, there is a brief window for going to sleep. If you miss that window, it will be 45 minutes before another one presents itself and Baby may fuss the entire 45 minutes. If you get Baby down at the first low-alert moment, she should sleep for 3 45-minute cycles but will probably wake up between each cycle and need to be helped back to sleep. This may involve picking Baby up, rocking, walking, soothing. Wearing in a sling is very helpful as Baby may not come out of sleep at that transition moment quite so much.

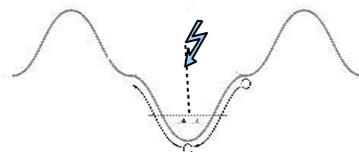
#### 8-10 weeks through 10-12 weeks



The transition from one stage to the next is a process and there may be some inconsistencies as Baby's capabilities mature.

Baby will be in alert phase for 60 minutes and at the end of that alert time, there is that brief sleep window. Again, if you miss the window you may have to wait 45 fussy minutes for the next low-alert moment. Baby should sleep for 2 45-minute cycles (or she *might* sleep a  $90 + 45 = 2 \frac{1}{2}$  hrs) but will possibly wake up between each cycle and need to be helped back to sleep. This may involve picking Baby up and soothing but probably for only a few minutes.

#### 10-12 weeks through 12-18 weeks



Wake and sleep cycle is 90 minutes. Baby will be in alert phase for 90 minutes and at the end of that alert time, there again is that go-to-sleep window. Baby should sleep for 90 minutes. He *may* still wake in the middle of that cycle (at 45 minutes) and want help to get back to sleep. However, at this age, try to get baby to sleep by patting, rocking the cradle, using white noise, reinserting the pacifier. Try not to pick up Baby to get him back to sleep. This may be easier in the early naps of the day and not so easy as the day wears on. As he gets closer to 16 weeks old, he will be more able to string together his sleep cycles without waking in the middle of them.

#### 18 weeks through 24 weeks

BRAC is mature at 90 minutes. During this period, Baby begins to consolidate naps. She may sleep fewer naps and they may vary in length but should be at least 90 minutes to be a "real nap" and provide adequate rest for the next alert BRAC. However, she will *always* be awake for some increment of 90 minutes ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours, 3 hours,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours). If you are watching for the go-to-sleep window, you will have dramatically better success in getting her to sleep.

*Meltdown...it's predictable ....so it's preventable!*