

Your baby may have belly aches or other feeding problems. This pamphlet may answer some of your questions. Other questions need to be answered by the baby's doctor or the WIC office. Relactation may be an option.

## Spitting up

Spitting up small amounts (about one tablespoon) is common in babies. Spitting up is not vomiting. Some babies spit up more often than others.

### Spitting up can be caused by:

- eating too fast
- swallowing too much air
- overfeeding
- an immature digestive system
- being too tired
- bouncing



### You can:

- look for your baby's feeding cues and feed before she starts crying
- burp your baby more often
- feed smaller amounts, more often
- avoid baby's diaper/clothing being too tight
- not jiggle or bounce your baby
- provide quiet time after feeding
- check that the bottle nipple hole is not too big
- adjust your breastfeeding position if your letdown is too strong

*Be patient: Babies usually spit up less as they grow older.*

## Constipation

Constipation is having hard stools that are difficult to pass. It is not caused by iron in formula or infant vitamins. Constipation is usually not a problem with babies who only receive breastmilk.

It is normal for babies to grunt and bear down even during a soft bowel movement. Bowel habits change. Some babies may not have a bowel movement every day.

### Constipation can be caused by:

- improper formula mixing
- early use of cereal or other foods

### You can:

- mix formula correctly
- delay solids until baby is about six months old



*It is common to see changes in bowel habits when changing from breastmilk to formula or from one formula to another.*

## Diarrhea

Diarrhea is frequent, watery stools which occur more often than usual.

### Diarrhea is caused by:

- improper hand washing
- improper feeding
  - too much juice
  - spoiled formula
  - not mixing formula correctly
- a reaction to formula
- a bacterial or viral infection
- poor bottle washing

### You can:

- wash your hands with hot, soapy water
- keep bottles and pacifiers clean
- mix and store formula properly
- throw away leftover formula
- delay juice until the baby can use a cup



*Continue to breastfeed or use formula, if your baby has diarrhea.*

*Call the doctor if diarrhea lasts for more than 24 hours.*

## Gas

All babies have some gas. Too much gas can cause belly aches, fussiness, or crying.



Gas can be caused by:

- swallowing too much air
- an immature digestive system
- mom's diet, if breastfeeding

### You can:

- feed smaller amounts, more often
- burp your baby often
- gently rub your baby's belly
- be sure the bottle nipple is full of breastmilk or formula while feeding
- adjust your diet, if breastfeeding

*If gas does not upset your baby do not let it upset you.*

## Colic or Fussiness

Colic can be long periods of non-stop crying not soothed by holding or feeding. Your baby may arch his back or pull up his legs as he cries.

Doctors are not sure why some babies are colicky or more fussy than others.

### You can:

- make sure your baby is clean, dry, and fed
- avoid over or underfeeding by paying attention to feeding cues
- swaddle – wrap your baby with his arms at his side
- hold your baby on his side or stomach
- make loud SHHHing noises
- sway your baby gently from side to side

*Caring for a colicky baby can be stressful. Ask for help from family, friends, or health providers.*

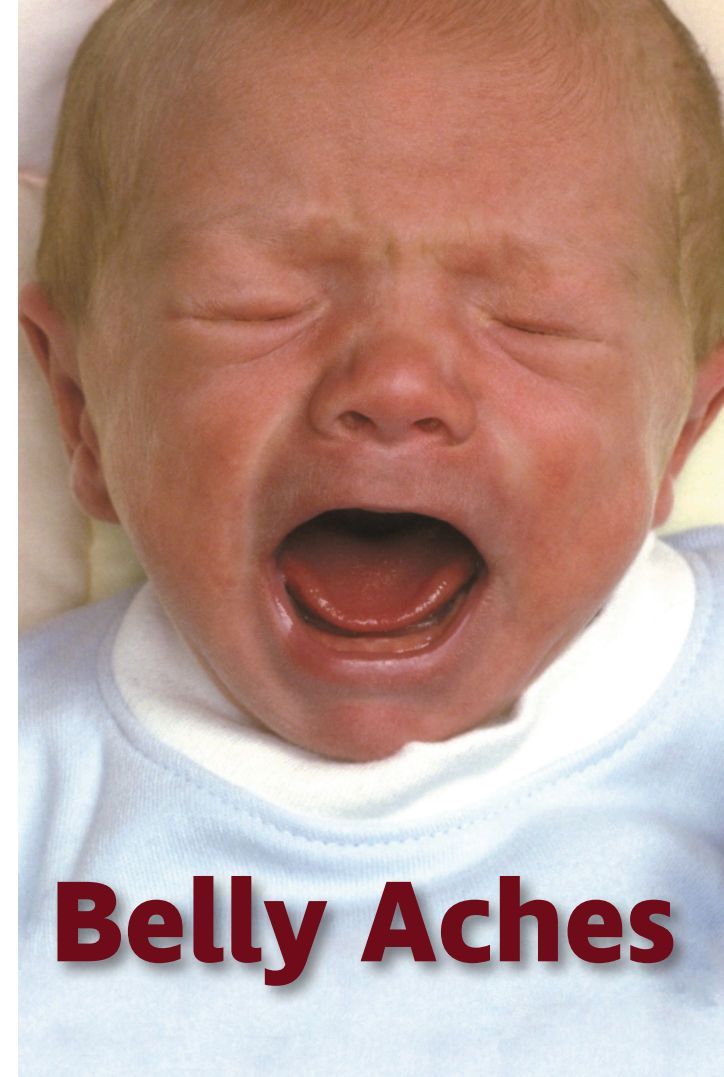
## Never shake a baby.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



# Belly Aches

## Feeding Problems During the First Three Months