

# Swaddling 101: Techniques for Newborn Soothing and Improved Sleep



## When and why should I swaddle my infant?

- Swaddling your infant in a blanket helps recreate the feeling of the womb and helps your infant feel safe and secure.
- Infants have a startle reflex that when triggered can prolong a crying spell or disrupt sleep. Securing your infant's arms in a swaddle helps to turn off this reflex.
- Many families find swaddling useful for:
  - ✓ Improving sleep, especially until 4 months of age
  - ✓ Calming a crying baby
  - ✓ Soothing a baby with colic
- Swaddling is very safe but please follow these recommendations:
  - ✓ **Always put your baby on her back to sleep**
  - ✓ Ensure there are no loose blankets in the crib
  - ✓ Use light clothing under the swaddle to avoid overheating
  - ✓ Keep the bottom of the swaddle loose so your baby's developing hips have room to flex and move
  - ✓ After age 1-2 months, limit swaddling to sleep to give your baby plenty of developmental playtime

## How to Swaddle

- A light-weight blanket with some stretch will allow you to make a snug swaddle.
- Place the blanket flat and slightly fold down one edge creating a triangle. Place your baby with the top of her shoulders at the folded down edge.
- Gently place your baby's arm by her side and firmly tuck one edge of the blanket across her body and under one arm. Repeat this process with the other arm and opposite blanket edge.
- Twist or fold the bottom of the blanket and tuck it underneath your baby, checking that her legs have room to bend at the knees and hips.
- Some babies initially get more fussy with their arms restrained – this will usually pass as the swaddle soothes them, but many families choose to place the infant's hand on their chest instead.
- Please view this video for more detailed instructions:  
<http://www.hipdysplasia.org/Developmental-Dysplasia-Of-The-Hip/Hip-Healthy-Swaddling/>

