



# Living Without Sleep

## *Coping With Infant Sleeping Patterns*

You heard about it before the baby came: lack of sleep. Getting used to living with a new baby is difficult, especially when you get so little sleep at night. There are some adjustments you can make to your routine to make coping with infant sleeping patterns easier.

### **Nap Time**

As cliché as it sounds, sleep when your baby sleeps. Leave the dishes and the laundry. Baby's nap time is a precious time for you, too. Avoid the temptation to make phone calls or catch up on housework. Lie down and close your eyes. Even 15-minute cat naps help. If you can't sleep, do something relaxing. Take a hot bath, meditate, listen to soothing music.

### **Help Your Baby Sleep**

- Wake your baby for a late feeding before you go to bed. This may help her sleep a little longer during the night, so you can, too.
- When your baby wakes up, get to her as soon as possible, before she begins crying hard. This will make getting her back to sleep a little easier.

### **Nighttime Feedings**

- Make yourself as comfortable as possible for nighttime feedings.
- Keep your socks or slippers nearby.
- Keep a glass of water and a blanket within reach.
- Add a dimmer switch or dim lamp so you can keep the light on low all night or turn on a dim light that's less shocking to your eyes.

### **Take Care of Yourself**

- Eat well.
- Try to take a walk at least every other day.
- Pay attention to your emotions. Sleep deprivation can add to postpartum depression.
- Ask for help. Bring someone in to help you care for the baby so you can sleep. If you're breast-feeding, have your partner get the baby, change her and bring her to you.

