



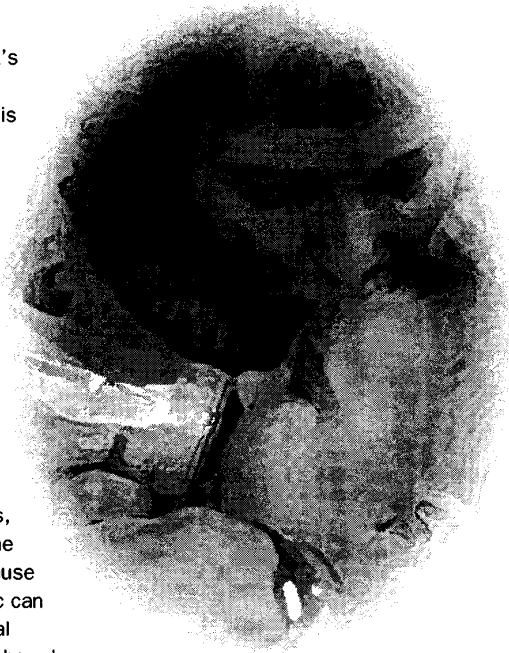
## Children's Health

# Colic

### WHAT IT IS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Colic can magnify a new parent's feelings of frustration and inadequacy. Your baby brings his legs up, tightens the abdomen and cries. Feeding, changing and cuddling make little or no difference. The good news: Colic is rarely dangerous and doesn't last forever. Most often, colic begins at about 2 weeks of age and ends by 4 months of age. It occurs most often during late afternoon and evening hours.

Although many theories exist about an immature digestive system, food allergies, sensitivity to a busy, noisy home and abdominal gas, the true cause is unknown. In rare cases, colic can indicate early signs of a medical condition that occurs when the bowel becomes obstructed. Your doctor can examine your baby and run tests if this is suspected.



### CALL THE DOCTOR IF...

➤ ***your baby has frequent green, watery bowel movements accompanied by vomiting.***

➤ ***your baby shows signs of dehydration: dry mouth, sunken eyes and soft spot and extreme irritability.***

### HOW TO SOOTHE YOUR BABY

- Feed your baby in a sitting position. This will help keep the baby from swallowing too much air.
- Burp your baby after each ounce consumed.
- If you're bottle-feeding, make sure the nipple hole is large enough. Babies swallow more air if the nipple hole is too small.
- Offer your baby a pacifier.
- Take your baby for a ride in the car or stroller.
- Wear a baby carrier while vacuuming or doing household chores.
- Carefully place your baby face down, with her face on your open hand and her legs straddling your inner elbow. Support your baby by holding her back with your other hand and walk around the house for a while.
- Eliminate cows' milk from your baby's formula or from your diet if you're breast-feeding.
- Bundle your baby up in a receiving blanket, keeping his arms and legs close to his body. (This mimics the tightness of the womb and may relieve gas symptoms.) Walk or rock your baby.
- Place your baby in his crib or bassinet, close the bedroom door and walk away. You need the break and your baby may need to cry himself to sleep. You can check your baby as often as every five minutes.
- Vibrations or repetitive sounds, such as a fan, vacuum, bubbling aquarium or clothes dryer, may help soothe some babies.