

# Spitting Up

## *Is this normal?*

Spitting up is common in healthy babies. During their first three months, about half of all babies experience their stomach contents coming back up into the esophagus, a condition known as gastroesophageal reflux, infant reflux or infant acid reflux.

Many babies spit up after feeding. Most spitting up is not a real problem – it's just messy. Some babies will spit up an entire feeding without distress. Others only spit up small amounts. Most infants outgrow this phase by the time they are sitting.



## What is the Difference Between Spitting Up and Vomiting?

Spitting up is the easy flow of a baby's stomach contents through his or her mouth, possibly with a burp. Vomiting occurs when the flow is shooting out rather than dribbling from the mouth.

Vomiting, unlike spitting up, occurs when an infant forcefully expels the contents of their stomach. Frequent vomiting can be a sign of a more serious illness. If this happens, take your baby to your doctor as soon as you can.

## Causes of Spitting Up

- Trapped air from burping
- Swallowing extra air from excessive crying
- Overfeeding
- Too much movement during a feeding
- Laying baby flat after a feeding

## Things You Can Do:

- Burp baby often during a feeding.
- Never force an infant to eat more than he or she wants.
- Avoid too much motion or play during a feeding.
- Feed your baby in a partially upright position.
- Hold or put infant in a semi-upright position for at least 15 minutes after a feeding.



## Call Your Doctor Right Away If:

- Infant vomits large amounts often and throughout the day.
- Infant has fever or other illness.
- Infant is not gaining enough weight.
- Vomit has blood or mucus in it.

## Managing Colic

Nobody knows exactly what causes colic, but there are some common symptoms associated with it. The most common symptom of colic is frequent, repeated episodes of excessive crying. These episodes of crying may last for long periods of time and typically occur at about the same time each day – late afternoon or early evening. However, they can occur at any time during the day. Other symptoms of colic may include fussiness, sleeping troubles or severe gas pains. If your baby is experiencing colic symptoms or feeding problems, you should talk with your baby's doctor.

## Tips for managing colic symptoms:

### Keep moving.

Hold your baby close to you and take a walk or push baby in a stroller. Another technique is to put your baby in his car seat and take a ride. The motion and hum of the engine may work.

## Rock Around the Clock.

Sometimes applying gentle pressure on a baby's stomach can help. Try holding your baby, stomach side down, across your lap or arm, then rock slowly and gently.

## Massage your baby.

Lay your baby on his or her abdomen across your lap and massage his or her back after feeding.

## Bundle Up.

Sometimes the movement of your baby's own arms and legs can upset them. Try swaddling your baby securely in a light blanket, holding the baby close and rocking gently. Bundling resembles what it was like for your baby inside the womb and comforts your baby.

## Make some white noise.

Try putting on "white noise" to create a steady background sound that could soothe your baby. White noise is best described as a steady, humming sound. Some examples of white noise include TV static or the sound of a running fan, dishwasher, or vacuum cleaner.

## Try feeding.

Until you establish a regular feeding schedule, your baby may be hungry when you do not expect it. Offer your infant a feeding. If it is clear that your baby is not really hungry, try giving a pacifier instead. Sometimes the simple motion of sucking can be enough to calm a baby.

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