

Some Sleeping Tips for Toddlers!

1-3years

Toddlers sleep between 12 and 14 hours across the day and night. By 18months, most toddlers have given up their morning nap and are taking one long afternoon nap of 1 ½ -3 hours. The number of hours a toddler sleeps will be different for each child, but expect your toddler to sleep about the same amount each day. Continue to expect that sleep will be disrupted by illness, changes in routine, and other stressful events. Separation anxiety may also cause problems at bedtime. Most toddlers switch from a cot to a bed between 2 and 3 years of age. If the change happens too early, it can disrupt sleep.

Many toddlers continue to awaken during the night, usually as a result of poor sleep habits. All children wake briefly throughout the night. However, a toddler who has not learned how to fall asleep on their own at bedtime will not be able to return to sleep without help from their parents.

How to help your toddler sleep well

- *Develop a daily sleep schedule* – Have regular nap times and a bedtime that ensures enough night-time sleep. Napping too late in the afternoon can make it hard to your toddler to fall asleep at bedtime. Avoid cutting back on naps to encourage night-time sleep as this can result in overtiredness and a worse night's sleep
- *Encourage the use of a security object* – Helping your toddler become attached to a security object that they can keep in bed with them can be beneficial. This often helps a child feel more relaxed at bedtime and throughout the night
- *Develop a bedtime routine* – Establish a consistent bedtime routine that includes calm and enjoyable activities, such as bath and bedtime stories. The activities occurring closest to “lights out” should occur in the room where your toddler sleeps.
- *Set up a consistent bedroom environment* – Make sure your child's bedroom environment is the same at bedtime as it is throughout the night. Also, toddler's sleep best in a room that is dark, cool and quiet
- *Put your toddler to bed drowsy but awake* – Encourage your toddler to fall asleep independently by putting them to bed drowsy but awake. This will enable them to fall back to sleep on their own when they naturally awaken through the night
- *Set limits* – If your toddler stalls at bedtime, be sure to set clear limits, such as how many books you will read
- *Please contact your doctor if:*
 - Your child appears to have any trouble breathing, snores or is a noisy breather
 - Your child has unusual nighttime awakenings or significant night-time fears that are concerning
 - Your child has difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, and/or if sleep problems are affecting their behaviour during the day