



## Six Infant States Wakefulness or Sleepiness

By observing your baby parents get to know their infants different states and when they occur what the expected responses are in each and can respond to requests and signals infants are trying to give which helps them learn the world is good and caring. Parents might ask themselves “what is my baby doing right now, what is my baby trying to tell me”? The states that you observe your baby go in and out of throughout the day help you know what activities your baby might be most receptive too at any given time. These states include:

### Two Sleep States

**Deep Sleep**—regular breathing, eyes closed—no eye movement, no spontaneous activity except startles or jerky movements, alternates with light sleep about every 30 minutes

**Light Sleep**—rapid eye movement can be observed under the eyelids—eyes may open momentarily, low activity level with random movements from startles not as jerky as when in deep sleep, breathing can be irregular and sucking movements occur.

### Four Awake States

**Drowsy**—eyes may be open but lids may seem heavy, dazed look, eyes may flutter, activity level varies, movements usually smooth, may have a delayed reaction to stimulation, state change after stimulation frequently occurs, mild startles—best time to give opportunity to sleep or to wake up gradually.

**Quiet Alert**—eyes wide open, bright look, rarely moves, seems to focus attention on source of stimulation either something seen or heard, has a kind of glazed look—especially fun to play with.

**Active Alert**—eyes open, frequent eye movement, considerable motor activity, thrusting movements of arms and legs, reacts to stimulation with increase startles or activity, brief fussy vocal sounds occur, shows interest in objects but not as much in faces—infant may try to sooth self at first—if unable to do so may need parents help (see what to do if my baby cries)

**Crying**—eyes may be open or tightly closed, intense crying which is difficult to stop with stimulation, may attempt to comfort self by putting fist in mouth but may be difficult as they are feeling stressed, may fall asleep, may need parents touch, soothing voice, holding in order to calm

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