



# It's OK to walk away

It's OK to walk away if you have checked the baby is safe and the crying is getting to you.

A baby's cry is designed to get your attention. Babies brains have not yet developed the circuits that give them self-control or understanding. They cry just to get your attention. A baby might cry to send out a signal of discomfort or they have been suddenly startled. Sometimes though, babies cry for no reason and sometimes they cry and cannot be calmed. These are the times the crying might feel like it's really getting to you. Not being able to stop a baby crying does not mean you are doing anything wrong. It also does not mean that you are a bad parent. We all feel like this sometimes. Your baby is not crying to annoy you and you do not have a 'bad' or 'naughty' baby. The crying isn't going to cause any harm and eventually this stage will pass. After about 5 months of age, experts say babies are more likely to cry for a reason. Over time, you may be able to work out what that is.

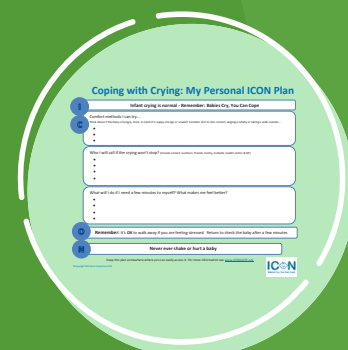
If you think your baby is poorly, of course see a health professional or call 111. If you've done all the normal checks, baby is not ill and if you feel yourself reaching that point of frustration take a break!

**It's OK to walk away for a few minutes until you calm yourself down.**

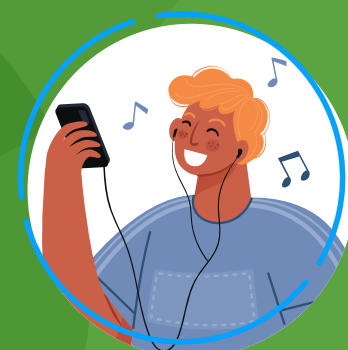
Put baby somewhere safe like a moses basket or cot before walking away.



Think about how you might take your mind off the crying remember your Personal Crying Plan.



You may find listening to some music calms you down for example.



Have a cup of tea/coffee or soft drink.

Talk to someone.

Try taking 10 deep breaths and trying some relaxation techniques.



You must go back and check on the baby after a few minutes. When you feel calm you can handle the baby safely.

Whether you are a first time parent/carer or you are very experienced, caring for a baby can bring with it lots of different emotions. You will be having less sleep than normal which can make it difficult to cope with the crying. If there are other stresses in your life, this makes it harder for you to cope with things you cannot control like a baby that takes a long time to calm and stop crying.

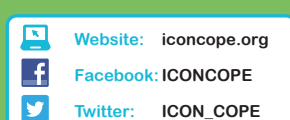
At these times it is important to know where to go for support. This could be your partner, your parents/relatives, your neighbours, local support groups, helplines, professionals. It's a good idea to think about where you can get support before this peak of normal crying starts. Filling in the ICON crying plan may help you. Those in your house can help to support each other in getting through this phase. Keep your crying plan somewhere that you can see it, on the fridge door or by the baby's cot.



If you are worried your baby is ill contact your GP, Health Visitor, Midwife, or call 111 or 999 if you think your baby needs emergency medical help.

Getting a break and taking turns to get sleep, sleeping when the baby sleeps, asking a trusted friend to take over whilst you sleep, working together as parents/carers or other family members or trusted friends can be helpful in lowering the stress. Remembering that either one of you may feel that you are struggling at different times and if you are on your own you may never feel like you have a break. Talk about it with those close to you to help find ways to get through it.

Remember it's OK to walk away, for a few minutes if the crying is getting to you. It is stressful but it will pass and you can cope.



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Baby in the cot image - used with permission from The Lullaby Trust  
- Safer sleep for babies, Support for families.

**Think about your own feelings.**

Learn to recognise when you are beginning to become stressed and the stress is building and ask for help.

We have all been there and we have all needed some help. You aren't a bad parent and you don't have a bad baby. You have a normal baby going through a normal phase.