

Keeping children safe at home: Shaken Baby Syndrome

Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Shaken Baby Syndrome is a term used to describe the very serious injuries that can happen if a baby is roughly shaken.
- Children, especially babies, have very weak neck muscles and do not yet have full support for their heavy heads.
- When children are shaken, their brains move back and forth inside their skulls. This can cause serious injuries such as:
 - blindness or eye damage
 - developmental delays
 - seizures
 - damage to the spinal cord or paralysis
 - brain damage
 - death
- Shaken Baby Syndrome often occurs when a parent or caregiver shakes a baby when they are frustrated or angry because the baby will not stop crying.

Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Taking care of a baby can be difficult, especially if your child cries a lot. It is normal and natural to feel frustrated when you cannot calm a crying baby.
- If your baby is crying, do your best to calm him or her. Check to see whether the crying is a signal that your baby needs something like a diaper change, feeding, or help for a fever. Check if your baby is too hot or too cold.

- If you feel yourself getting upset or angry, put the baby in a safe place. Take a break from the sound of the crying by:
 - Listening to some music
 - Doing something you find relaxing like reading, taking a shower, or deep breathing
 - Exercising
 - Calling a friend or family member
- No matter how angry you get, **never shake your baby.**
- Tell everyone who cares for your infant that shaking a baby is dangerous. Let them know that it is okay to call you for help when needed.
- If your baby cries often, call your pediatrician. There may be a medical reason why your child is crying.

More info: <http://www.childsafetyeurope.org>

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TIPS