

Baby Talk: Smiling, Coosing, Crying – What It All Means

By: Dr. Tanya Altmann



You and your baby will find your own communication; and smiles, coos and cries will all be a part of it. By learning to enjoy the different cues along the way, before you know it, your baby will be talking!

Smiling...

Smiling is one of the most exciting and important things that a baby does. In fact, your baby's smile is so powerful that there are actual parts of your brain that light up when you see it. Your baby begins smiling almost from birth, but it isn't until around six to eight weeks that their "social smile" occurs. Here are a few things to know about smiling...

- **Keep a House Full of Smiles:** Create a warm and happy atmosphere in your home. It's been found that when babies enjoy themselves, they take in much more through their senses. Relaxing and responding to your baby's delighted squeals with smiles and your laughter can help you bond with your child in their early years.
- **"Feel Better" Smiles:** When you notice your child's mood change or something seems "off" trust your mom radar! If their smile starts to fade, many moms start to worry that the dreaded fever or flu is on the way. If you are seeing symptoms of fever and pain, consult your pediatrician and discuss the possibility of giving your child a pain reliever or fever reducer like Infants' **TYLENOL**® to help relieve their symptoms. If you see that smile that screams, "I feel better!" – it's a great indicator your baby is on the mend.
- **Developmental Smiles:** If your baby is not smiling back at you by 2 or 3 months of age, it may be time to have a discussion with your pediatrician. Just remember that this alone is not necessarily a sign of anything related to your child's progress, since all babies grow and develop at different rates.

Cooing...

Cooing is your baby's way of finding their voice. Babies typically begin cooing around the second month, but this can vary with every child. Cooing is a combination of laughter and vowel sounds, and typically lets you know your baby is happy and content. Coos actually engage different mouth muscles. You can keep your baby cooing by...

- **Vocalizing:** Encourage your baby's vocalization by smiling, talking and making silly faces and sounds with them.
- **Exaggerating:** Use "parentese" or "baby talk" when communicating. This may sound silly to us grownups, but it's great for your baby's development. Research shows that babies respond well to shorter sentences, smaller words, and exaggerated tones and gestures.
- **Reading:** It's never too early to start looking at books and reading with your baby. Set aside time every day to read. Your baby will enjoy seeing your facial expressions and smiles.

Crying...

For new moms, a baby's cry can be scary. But, it's important to remember that crying is an important way for your baby to communicate. On average, newborns cry up to two hours a day, and during the first few months, they may cry even more. But don't stress! As you bond with your child, you'll learn to distinguish between different cries and what they all mean. Here are some tips on the best way to handle things when your little one is shedding some tears...

- **The Five "S's":** This approach to calming your crying baby was developed by Dr. Harvey Karp. Swaddling, shushing, swinging, sucking and side/stomach positioning (when your baby is awake) are all beneficial. Another "S" I like to add is singing, which can be coupled with dancing together or going out for a walk.
- **Excessive Crying:** If your baby's crying is high pitched, constant, or inconsolable, it can be a sign of illness. It's important to have a thermometer on hand to check for fever. If your baby is under 3 months of age and has a fever, always call your pediatrician or go to the Emergency Room because a newborn can get sick very quickly and should be evaluated by a medical professional. For older infants, consult your pediatrician to determine if they are in need of a medication such as Infants' **TYLENOL**®. If your baby continues to cry, call your pediatrician.



How to Determine When it's Time to Call the Pediatrician

By: Dr. Tanya Altmann



As a pediatrician, I get calls from worried moms at all times of the day and night. According to a recent survey conducted on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®**, six out of ten (61%) moms with young children wish they knew more about how children catch colds and the flu.¹ It's normal to worry about your child! But it's important to know when it's time to call the doctor, and when the care you have available at home is enough to get your child back on the road to health. This information should help.

Fever

When to Call the Doctor About a Fever: Fevers, especially in babies, are common and often go hand in hand with a cold or the flu. The first step is a fever reducer like Infants' **TYLENOL®** – which pediatricians have recommended and moms have relied on for more than 20 years. However, there are certain instances, depending on your little one's age, when a doctor's visit is needed, including:

- **Babies Less Than 3 Months Old:** If a newborn, less than 3 months of age, has a rectal temperature of 100.4° or higher, call your pediatrician right away or go to the Emergency Room. Newborns can become very sick very quickly and need to be evaluated. For babies this young, speak to your doctor before giving a fever-reducing medication.
- **Babies Between 3 and 6 Months Old:** If your infant is 3 to 6 months old with a temperature above 102°, or appears very sick, is lethargic, won't drink fluids, or has any fever that lasts more than 3 days, call your pediatrician.
- **Children of Any Age:** Regardless of age, if your little one refuses or is unable to drink fluids, experiences a seizure, a rash, a stiff neck, confusion, trouble breathing, continuous crying, persistent vomiting or diarrhea, is difficult to wake up, or just appears to be abnormally sick, call your doctor immediately.

Coughs

Know the Sounds of Coughing: Nearly three-fourths (72%) of moms say they are extremely or very concerned when their child has a wet, phlegmy cough, according to a survey from the makers of **TYLENOL®**.¹ But there are a few specific signs that can help moms differentiate between a normal cough that can easily be treated at home, and one that needs a pediatrician's attention. If your child has a high fever or any sign of difficulty breathing such as wheezing or chest pain, call your pediatrician.

Runny Nose

Grab the Tissues: A runny nose is common among children, and while it can be messy, it's rarely a reason for worry. It's usually caused by a common cold and will get better on its own. To help your child feel better, try soft tissues, a dab of aloe or petroleum jelly to prevent chapping, a cool mist humidifier, and lots of TLC and some time.

Diarrhea and Vomiting

- **Fluids, Fluids, Fluids:** Fluids are important to prevent and treat dehydration. Try small amounts at first and increase as tolerated. Call your pediatrician if your child can't keep down even small amounts of fluids or is showing any signs of dehydration such as fewer wet diapers, lack of energy, no tears or dry lips and tongue.
- **Prevent Diaper Rash:** If your infant or toddler has diarrhea, apply a diaper ointment to prevent and treat any irritation or diaper rash that might develop.
- **Watch That Tummy:** It's always good to keep in mind brands like Infants' **TYLENOL®** that are gentle on the tummy. But if your child can't keep down even a small amount of fluid, looks lethargic, shows any sign of dehydration, or just appears to be abnormally sick, it's time to explore treatment options with your doctor.

¹ Online survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®** between May 22 and June 3, 2013 among 300 U.S. moms, age 18+, with children who are 0-3 years old, can smile at things they find amusing, and have recovered from an illness such as a cold or the flu.



Preparing Mom and Child for a Doctor's Visit

By: Dr. Tanya Altmann



Nothing warms my heart more than the smile of a healthy, happy baby. Regular pediatrician visits are essential to a child's healthy development. Sometimes though, the kids are not so excited to see me – parents are actually just as nervous. So the first thing I do is smile at the baby to help them feel safe and hopefully see them smile back. As a pediatrician and a mom of two young ones, I've picked up some tips along the way that I hope will help you and your child be able to smile through your next doctor's visit.

For Mom...

- **Get to Know Your Pediatrician:** Your baby's first doctor's visit will be within a few days of leaving the hospital. After your hospital follow-up appointment, regular well-baby examinations for the first three years of life are usually scheduled at 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 2 years, 2 ½ years and 3 years. It's important to ask your doctor all the questions you may have. Finding someone you are comfortable with is important. Working as a team together will help build the trust needed to form a great relationship.
- **Plan Ahead:** With all that you've got on your mind, it's easy to forget the questions you plan to ask your doctor. Consider jotting them down before your appointment to make sure you remember everything you want to discuss. Better yet, try out the new Kids Wellness Tracker app from the makers of **TYLENOL®**. This handy app is a helpful tool for any new mom needing to stay on top of your child's medications, vaccinations, and other things relevant to your little one's health.
- **Dress for Success:** It's such fun to dress up your newborn in cute outfits! But remember, comfortable, easy-to-remove clothing is best for doctor's visits since your baby will need to be undressed for their weight check and full exam.
- **Take Away Their Pain:** If your child has a fever or pain from teething, consider giving them Infants' **TYLENOL®**. It's been relied on by moms for generations to relieve a baby's discomfort. Remember to call your pediatrician right away though if your baby under 3 months of age has a fever of 100.4 or higher.
- **Be Prepared:** Stock your baby bag with all the necessities, just in case you're away longer than expected. Important items include: several diapers, baby wipes, diaper cream, a changing pad, a plastic bag for dirty diapers or clothes, a change of clothing (for both you and baby), and a blanket, as well as some hand sanitizer. And don't forget to restock items so that you're always ready to go anywhere, anytime.
- **Immunization Preparation:** Your baby will receive several important immunizations in their first few years. But sometimes the immunizations can cause your little one to have a fever or pain. In that case having a pain-reliever, fever-reducer, that's gentle on the tummy, like Infants' **TYLENOL®**, on hand for after the visit is definitely a good idea.
- **Don't Wait:** You don't have to wait for the scheduled well-baby exams to see your pediatrician. You can always make an appointment for your baby or toddler at any time if a specific problem or concern arises between your regular visits.

For Child...

- **Role Play:** Make going to the doctor's office fun! Role playing at home can prepare your kids for a checkup and help alleviate any fear they may have about going to the doctor. "Play Doctor" kits are a great way to help infants and toddlers feel more comfortable with their different body parts, as well as relieving their anxiety about a doctor's equipment during an exam.
- **Bring a "Friend":** If your infant or toddler has a blanket, favorite stuffed animal, or toy, bring it along to help comfort them in the doctor's office. Most pediatricians will even play along and do a quick "check-up" on your baby's little stuffed friend in order to show them what to expect when it's their turn.



How to Stay Smiling During Cold & Flu

By: Dr. Tanya Altmann



Every day it seems like your baby finds new ways to make you smile and brighten your day. But when their temperature spikes and their smile fades, it can be downright scary. According to a survey conducted on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®**, many moms (70%) with young children worry more about their child's health during cold and flu season than any other time of year.¹ So, here are a few of my favorite tips to keep you and your little one healthy and smiling through the next few months:

- **Keep Germs Away:** Washing your child's hands is a tried and true way to help keep the germs at bay. It's best to wash your little one's hands, as well as your own, when entering the house, before eating, and after using the bathroom. Make it fun, by singing a song, using a yummy-smelling soap, or drying your hands with a fluffy favorite towel. If you're on-the-go, hand sanitizer or wipes are an easy, quick fix when soap and water aren't available.
- **Vaccinate:** More than two in five (43%) moms believe that a child can get the flu from a flu shot, according to a survey from the makers of **TYLENOL®**.¹ But that is a myth. Vaccination is the best way to protect your family from the flu. You should vaccinate everyone in the house who is six months and older. If your baby is younger than six months, you can protect your child by vaccinating everyone else around them, including parents, grandparents, siblings and other caregivers. Talk with your child's pediatrician about vaccinations.
- **Address Stuffy Noses:** A baby's stuffy nose can be relieved with a drop or two of nasal saline in each nostril. If the stuffiness is keeping your little one from sleeping or eating, try gentle suctioning too. This will help remove mucus from your child's nose. You can also run a cool-mist humidifier or vaporizer at night to alleviate the congestion.
- **Alleviate Fevers:** Babies have fevers quite often. But remember, most of them can be relieved at home. The #1 pediatrician recommended brand – Infants' **TYLENOL®** – is an effective fever-reducer for all new moms to have on hand. Of course, TLC and cuddles are important too! If that doesn't help your baby feel better and smile again or if your baby is under 3 months of age and has a temperature of 100.4 or higher, always, call your pediatrician.
- **Take Care of Yourself Too:** Worrying about your little one is natural – but don't forget to take care of yourself and the rest of your family too! If you start to come down with a cold or fever, make sure you rest, drink plenty of fluids and wash your hands to avoid sharing your germs with the rest of your family. Consider adult **TYLENOL®** cold products to help alleviate your own symptoms and get you back to feeling better so you are able to take care of your family again!
- **Trust Yourself - You Know Best:** No one knows your baby better than you. If you have an urgent question or notice that your child looks ill, don't hesitate to call your pediatrician – even in the middle of the night. According to the survey from the makers of **TYLENOL®**, more than half (57%) of moms call their child's pediatrician for advice or support when their child has a cold or the flu.¹ It's ok; that's what we're here for!

¹ Online survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the makers of **TYLENOL®** between May 22 and June 3, 2013 among 300 U.S. moms, age 18+, with children who are 0-3 years old, can smile at things they find amusing, and have recovered from an illness such as a cold or the flu.

