



Take A Break...
DON'T SHAKE!

Help us prevent
Shaken Baby Syndrome!

When Your Child Cries, **Take A Break - DON'T SHAKE**

Taking care of an infant can be challenging, especially when an end to the crying seems nowhere in sight. If you have tried to calm your crying child but nothing seems to work, it's important to stay in control of your temper. Remember, **it's NEVER okay to shake, throw or hit your child!**

If you feel as though you could lose control:

- Take a deep breath and count to 10.
- Take time out and let your baby cry alone.
- Call someone close to you for emotional support.
- Call your pediatrician. There may be a medical reason why your child is crying.

PREVENT **SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME!**

Shaken Baby Syndrome describes the serious injuries that can occur when an infant or toddler is shaken. These children, especially babies, have very weak neck muscles and do not yet have full support of their heavy heads. When they are shaken, their fragile brains move back and forth within their skulls. This can cause serious injuries such as:

- Blindness or eye damage
- Delay in normal development
- Seizures
- Brain damage
- Damage to the spinal cord (paralysis)
- DEATH

Shaken Baby Syndrome usually occurs when a parent or other caregiver shakes a baby out of anger or frustration, often because the baby will not stop crying. Shaken Baby Syndrome is a **serious form of child abuse.**

Remember, it is NEVER okay to shake a baby!

If you or your caregiver shakes your baby because of anger or frustration, the most important step is to get medical care right away. Immediately take your child to the pediatrician or emergency room. Don't let guilt, embarrassment or fear get in the way of your child's health or life.

Getting medical attention right away may save your child's life and prevent serious health problems from developing. If your baby's brain is damaged or bleeding inside from severe shaking, it will only get worse without treatment.

Be sure to tell your child's doctor if you suspect or know that your child was shaken. A doctor who is not aware that a child has been shaken may assume the baby is vomiting or having trouble breathing because of an illness. Mild symptoms of shaken baby syndrome are very much like those of infant colic, feeding problems and fussiness. Your child's doctor should have complete information so that he or she can treat your child properly.

Avera 
McKenna Hospital
& University Health Center

Women's Center

For non-emergency questions about
children and parenting, call (605) 322-3660.

*These materials are brought to you by the
Avera McKenna Shaken Baby Prevention Program SCAN team.*