



Never shake your baby

The number one reason babies are shaken is because they won't stop crying. Often frustrated parents or caregivers think that shaking a baby is a harmless way to make him or her stop. They do not know the harm that shaking can cause.

Shaken Baby Syndrome is one of the leading forms child abuse. It usually happens with babies under six months old, but can occur up to age three.

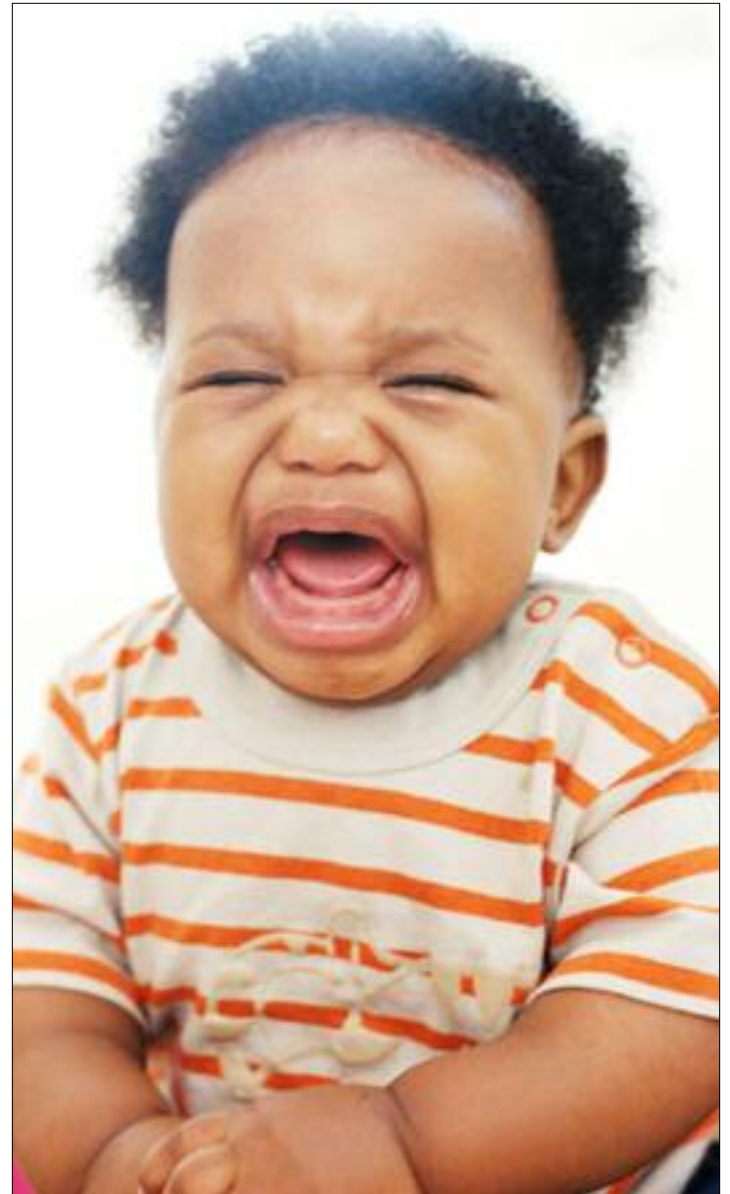
When a baby is shaken, their head moves back and forth. This sudden whiplash motion can cause bleeding inside the head and increased pressure on the brain. Sometimes you cannot see any injuries. But shaking a baby, even just for a few seconds, can hurt them for life. Many babies with Shaken Baby Syndrome even die.

To comfort your baby when he or she will not stop crying, try these things:

- Take a break if you need to, and have a friend or family member "take over" for a while.
- Go for a stroller ride.
- Check for diaper rash, teething or fever. Call the doctor if you think your baby is sick.
- Give your baby a pacifier and gently rock or walk your baby.
- Sing to your baby.
- Make sure the baby is fed, burped, dry and clothing is not too tight.
- Offer a noisy toy or rattle.

Remember! Never throw or shake your baby and always support the baby's head and neck.

Adapted from The National Exchange Club Foundation



It's tax time again. Need help with your taxes?

Houston Asset Building Coalition's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance is free income tax preparation for people earning less than \$38,000 a year, Earned Income Tax Credit information and financial education. To find a location in your area, call the United Way Help Line at 211 or 713-957-4357.

It's allergy season—How do you tell if your child has an allergy or a cold?

Your child is sneezing and has a runny nose. Does he have an allergy, or is it a cold? Although allergies and colds share many symptoms, there are some differences that can help you tell the two apart. Knowing the difference between an allergy and a cold will help you decide how to make your child feel better.

Fever. If your child has a fever, even a low one, he is much more likely to have a cold than an allergy. Fever is not common with allergies.

Nonclear nasal discharge. When your child is dripping white, yellow or greenish mucus from his nose, he probably has a cold, not an allergy. A watery discharge is common for both colds and allergies, so it can be hard to tell which he has unless he's also running a fever.

Sore throat. Children can have itchy or scratchy throats with allergies, but if your

child complains of actual throat pain, he most likely has a cold.

Looking sick. Children with allergies may be a bit more tired than usual, but they usually don't look very sick. Children with colds can appear sick and listless.

Eye symptoms. Eye symptoms such as red, itchy, watery eyes are more often seen with allergies than colds.

Sneezing. Children with colds will sneeze occasionally, but repeated, prolonged spells of sneezing are much more likely to be caused by an allergy.

Cough. Both allergies and colds can cause coughs that can be worse at night, but the cough usually doesn't last as long with colds as with allergies.

Duration. Symptoms of colds usually subside within a couple of weeks. Allergy symptoms may last for many weeks or months.

Age. If your child is under two years old, he is more likely to have a cold than an allergy. Allergies don't usually appear in children until after two years of age.

Exposure to infection. Many people may suddenly develop allergy symptoms when the weather changes, but when everyone seems to be coming down with something, it usually is a cold. Allergies aren't contagious.

Family history. A strong family history of allergies might lead you to suspect your child has allergies, too.

Seasonality. Although allergies and colds can happen anytime, allergies are much more common in the spring, early and late summer, and fall. Colds strike most often during the winter.

Allergies in children are very common and are one of the top reasons that children miss school. If you think your child has allergies, contact your child's doctor for an allergy test.

Spring Break sun safety tips

Spring Break is a great time for the family to get away from the cold, dark days of winter and have some fun in the sun. Keep your family safe while on your trip by following these tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Sun safety for babies

- Babies under 6 months of age should be kept out of direct sunlight. Move your baby to the shade under a tree, umbrella or stroller canopy.
- Dress babies in lightweight clothing that covers the arms and legs, and use brimmed hats.

Sun safety for kids

- Choose sunscreen that is made for children, preferably waterproof. Before covering your child, test the sunscreen on your child's back for a reaction. Apply carefully around the eyes, avoiding eyelids. If a rash develops, talk to your pediatrician.
- Select clothes made of tightly woven fabrics. Cotton clothing is both cool and protective.
- When using a cap with a bill, make sure the bill is facing forward to shield your child's face. Sunglasses with UV protection are also a good idea for protecting your child's eyes.
- If your child gets sunburn that result in blistering, pain or fever, contact your pediatrician.

Try making this healthy springtime treat with your children

Frozen Yogurt Pops

Prep time: about 1 to 2 hours

Ingredients:

- 1 8-oz. container of your favorite flavor of yogurt

Utensils:

- small paper cups
- wooden popsicle sticks (available in craft stores)
- plastic wrap

Directions:

- Pour yogurt into paper cups. Fill them almost to the top.
- Stretch a small piece of plastic wrap across the top of each cup.
- Using the popsicle stick, poke a hole in the plastic wrap. Stand the stick straight up in the center of the cup.
- Put the cups in the freezer until the yogurt is frozen solid.

Remove the plastic wrap, peel away the paper cup, and enjoy your pop!