

SLEEP NO ENOUGH?

My 14-month-old sleeps 12 hours a night but almost always never takes a nap. Is this enough for her? She doesn't seem at all cranky.

Sleep is important for a child's growth and development and taking naps helps a young child from being overtired and cranky. Young babies require more sleep, usually 15 to 20 hours (for newborns to babies of about six months) daily on the average, and this will decrease, as they grow older. Toddlers between one and three years of age would need about 10 to 12 hours of sleep. Your child does have sufficient hours of sleep. If she does not take naps, allow her periods of rest during the day. If she is not cranky and growing well, her sleep habits will be all right.

MYSTERIOUS SPOT

My three-year-old has developed a bald spot over one temple. Why?

Sorry, but it is very difficult to comment on this, as it can be anything from a birthmark to infections like fungus. It is highly recommended that you bring your child to your doctor to be properly assessed.

ADMINISTERING MEDS

I'm not sure what the correct pain-medication dosage is for my two-year-old. Should I go by her age or her weight?

For normal sized children, the dosage should be similar for both age and weight. However, in many cases, the child may be heavier or lighter for his age. Hence taking the dosage according to the weight will be more accurate. If unsure, always consult your doctor or pharmacist.

**SUCKLING INSTINCT**

Should I give my baby a pacifier or encourage him to suck his thumb?

Babies have a natural instinct to suck, even when they are not hungry. Sucking can oftentimes comfort the child. If your child needs to suckle, pacifiers can be used to soothe them. Generally, babies will not need the pacifiers after about 18 months of age. Choose a good pacifier if your child needs one. It may be preferable to the thumb, as the thumb is more difficult to remove when the child does not need to suckle. A good pacifier will be one that is shaped orthodontically, and is soft. It is better to choose a good pacifier that is made "in one piece" and will not break off when the child sucks too hard. The shield of the pacifier should be large so that the baby will not suck the whole pacifier into the mouth and be choked. Pacifiers do wear out, and you will need to check if you need to replace it with a new one.

This month's questions were answered by:
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WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S WELL-BEING?
Not quite sure what to do when it comes to caring for your offspring? Write in to Health File. Your questions will be answered by a Consultant Paediatrician.

Address your queries to:
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