



Reflux: What it is & how to deal with it

Reflux is a fairly common issue in infants and is not of (medical) concern if your baby is thriving (gaining at least 150gr/week) and if they are a 'happy spiller', or the pain resolves after winding and a little spill.

Symptoms of reflux that might be causing issues & need medical attention are

- Spilling large amounts
- Lower than ideal weight gains
- Appears to be in pain from the spilling
- Has acidic smelling breath
- Is not happy lying flat on the floor even after a nap or long after a feed
- Develops a feeding aversion

Reflux can appear as a result of an immature oesophageal tract, which means the sphincter muscle at the bottom of the oesophagus isn't strong enough to hold the stomach contents down. This is most common and usually resolves itself as your baby gets older, more mobile and stronger.

Reflux can also develop due to an allergy and this is something to be explored with your GP or Paediatrician, who may recommend medication and/or an elimination diet, if you are breastfeeding. If you are formula feeding, switching to a hydrolysed formula, along with medication might be a route worth exploring.

There are ways we can help reflux without medication

- Split feeds - smaller feeds more frequently
- Holding your baby upright after a feed
- Finish feeding at least 15 minutes before a nap
- Assisting your baby to sleep to prevent over tiredness, as this can exacerbate reflux symptoms

If you are bottle feeding with a thickened formula

ensure you are using a larger teat size than recommended for their age, or a variflow teat so your baby isn't having to work too hard to feed, as this will burn up calories & frustrate your baby.

Even with a happy spiller, the amount of extra washing & the constant smell of sour milk around the house can really get to you.

I remember my daughter having several spills each day over her first 4 months of life and paired with a lack of sleep, I had several moments when I burst into tears (at home & in public), thinking that I just can't deal with it any more.

My advice

- if possible use **extra towels to cover yourself**, the bed, couch or wherever else you're feeding/burping
- **Brolly sheets** are fantastic as well, as they are water resistant and cope even better with the spills than ordinary towels
- lots of **spare clothes for your baby**
- 1 set of **spare clothes for YOU** when out & about: exhaustion & smelling like vomit/sour milk is a recipe for tears
- **try to breath through it** and remind yourself that this shall pass too-a lot of happy spillers will improve quickly around the 4 months mark
- **reach out to your village**, don't expect yourself to become super woman. You are already one, even if you don't feel like it!

Your Village

B A B Y & C H I L D S L E E P S U P P O R T