

The 5 S's

About Dr. Karp's method

[Dr. Harvey Karp](#) believes that babies can experience "fourth trimester" issues in their first few months of life. Babies can have a difficult time adjusting to the new stimuli present in life outside of the womb, causing many to experience colic or to cry for extended periods of time.

The Happiest Baby On The Block method formulated by Dr. Karp addresses these issues by helping parents learn to effectively recreate the environment of the womb. There are five components to this method to calm a crying baby. Parents have found these steps successful in alleviating their baby's colic symptoms and helping soothe baby to sleep.

Using cross-cultural techniques combined with his own research, Dr. Karp has developed the "five S's system." Some babies need all five steps to be soothed while others need just a few to help induce what he calls the "calming reflex."

1. **Swaddling** - Swaddling provides the continuous touch and support the baby experienced while still in the womb. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends learning [how to swaddle safely](#) and to phase it out by the time baby is 3 months of age or able to roll over.
2. **Side/stomach position** - Baby should only be placed in this position while awake. In your arms, place baby either on their left side to assist in digestion or on the stomach to provide reassuring support. Once baby is soothed, you can safely put baby alone and on his or her back in her crib while sleeping.
3. **Shushing Sounds** - These sounds imitate the continual whooshing sound made by the blood flowing through arteries near the womb. A shushing noise can come from you or the white noise of a distant vacuum cleaner, hair dryer or other household appliance. A [white noise CD](#) can also be used.
4. **Swinging** - Every movement a mom makes during pregnancy causes a swinging motion in the womb for baby. After baby is born, this calming motion is abruptly taken away and some babies have difficulty adjusting. Swinging can be done by supporting the head and neck while keeping baby close and your motions small (no more than one inch back and forth).
5. **Sucking** - "Sucking has its effects deep within the nervous system," notes Karp, "and triggers the calming reflex and releases natural chemicals within the brain." This step can be accomplished with a bottle, breast, pacifier or finger.

Learn more about *The Happiest Baby on the Block* technique from Dr. Karp's [book](#) or [DVD](#).

Adapted from: <http://www.colichelp.com/shop/happiestbabyontheblock.html>

For additional information, visit: <https://happiestbaby.com/using-the-5-ss/>