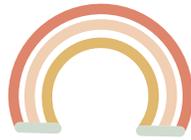




Navigating
Months 3 & 4



★ RECLAIM THE JOY
OF PARENTHOOD ★



★ Welcome ★

Dear Parents,

I have read the books and scoured the internet for the best guidance about the tricky stage from 13-21 weeks. All resources seem only to empathize with the struggle and tell parents to just survive this time or give vague suggestions with no practical ways to implement them. But over the last several years of my work as a sleep consultant, I have met mom after mom searching for a way to do more than simply survive these months with baby. I heard that need and developed this guide to help you navigate this tricky age. It is truly a culmination of years of experience and research.

- If you took my newborn class and have a great sleeper but aren't sure what comes next for your baby, this guide is for you!
- If you had a great sleeper during the newborn phase but all of a sudden sleep is falling apart, this guide is for you too!
- And if you have had months of struggle with a baby who just won't sleep, this guide is also for you!

This guide is not meant to be “active sleep training” as your little one is simply not developmentally ready for that yet. Rather, this is a road map to help prepare you for the weeks and months ahead. Your little one is facing some of the biggest changes in brain development that will occur in the first 2 years of life. My goals are to:

- Help you support your baby through this amazing (and sometimes frustrating) stage of development.
- Improve night sleep.
- Set you up for success in the months ahead.

Please know that if your baby does reach 5 months of age and still struggles to sleep through the night, the online class “The ABC’s of Sleep” will be available for you. It is a step-by-step, hands-on approach to sleep training your baby. This 14 night plan has a 98% success rate in achieving 10-12 hour restful nights. Should you need “The ABC’s of Sleep” class in the future, it will not count as a failure in any way. In fact, any progress in navigating through this 3-4 month phase will only make sleep training that much easier. On the other hand, some of you will likely see that this guide helps your nights to become exactly what you need them to be.

Wherever your journey may take you, thank you for trusting me to help you “Navigate Months Three and Four.”

Wishing you all the best,

Cara

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DEVELOPMENTAL *Changes*



Developmental Changes

Your baby has graduated from newborn status!! Congratulations!

Your baby has left the newborn stage and has entered infancy. However, the journey of growth doesn't even begin to slow down from here. In fact, between the end of the newborn stage and the sixth month, your baby will experience major changes. These changes will affect how she relates to the people around her, how she thinks about the way the world works, how she looks, how her body moves, and even in the way her sleep cycles function.

Let's explore some of those changes you are seeing or are about to see in your little one:

Baby is getting so big!!

In the 3-4 month phase, babies typically go through one or two major growth spurts. All of a sudden, those sweet onesies will become a bit too snug, and your baby will seem to feel heavier overnight. With these extra pounds, the "old man look" of the newborn phase ends, and your baby will start to fill out. You may even start to get those yummy thigh rolls!!

Expert Sleep Tip:

Growth spurts are often blamed for a baby's lack of sleep for months. This is simply not necessary. Growth spurts are characterized by an increase in sleep and feeding for about 3-7 days. Your baby definitely needs extra calories from more frequent nursing sessions or extra ounces in the bottle, but this doesn't mean that your baby needs to be eating every hour or two all night long. And remember: growth spurts last up to a week, not months!

Expert Sleep Tip:

This is the perfect age to ramp up tummy time! Tummy time works to develop your baby's back, arm, and shoulder muscles. These are the muscles needed to help your little one find a comfortable sleeping position as he begins to roll over in the crib. If your baby hates tummy time, try getting onto his level to engage his interest. Even an extra minute or two each day is helpful!

Wow, that baby can move!

Physical development is advancing at an astonishing rate during this 3-4 month period. Some babies roll over for the first time during this period, and those who aren't quite there yet are developing the skills to roll soon.



The world is so big and exciting!

In addition to all of these physical changes, your baby's brain is making new connections at an incredibly rapid pace. As his eyes are able to focus on things farther away, the world seems to open up to him. There are now things to learn, explore, and discover everywhere. Engaging in this world is so stimulating: every new sound, sight, and sensation adds new excitement to his world.

Expert Sleep Tip:

Everything new in this exciting world makes eating seem boring. Consider going to an unstimulating environment for all of your daytime feedings.

Expert Sleep Tip:

Now that your baby is able to predict certain outcomes, setting up repetition and routine has become so important. Babies thrive in predictable environments. Your baby will now recognize that a bath is a precursor to bed, and singing "Rock-a-bye Baby" means it's time for a nap.

Sleep like a baby???

When your baby was first born, his sleep worked differently than it will at any other point in his life. Instead of several stages of sleep, newborn sleep is divided into two types: quiet and active. These are most equivalent to the deep sleep stage and REM (dreaming) sleep stage of adults.

During 'Quiet' sleep, babies are difficult to wake. Remember stripping your newborn down to a diaper and wiping a wet cloth over his body only to have him sleep through a feeding? Yep, that's Quiet sleep.

Remember the grunting, moving, "fighting the swaddle," crying out... only to realize he was still sleeping? You guessed it, that's Active Sleep.

However, right when many mamas and babies seem to have settled into a comfortable lifestyle with this 2-stage sleep pattern, everything changes! Sometime between 3 ½ and 5 months, babies experience a sleep cycle shift. You may have heard of this ominous "Four Month Sleep Regression," but allow me to demystify it for you.

I am actually a part of the world!

Not only has your baby discovered this interesting, huge world, she is also learning that she's a part of it. Your baby is starting to recognize that for every action, there's a reaction. Yes! She is already learning cause and effect. For example, she has learned that if she giggles, mama giggles. If she throws a toy, mom will pick it up! (Again, again! It works! Yay!) If she whimpers, mommy will pick her up. You may notice that she repeats the same noises to elicit that response again. This new way of understanding the world is amazing. Your baby has become a little scientist: constantly observing, taking in data, and practicing hypotheses.



Sleep Cycle Stages

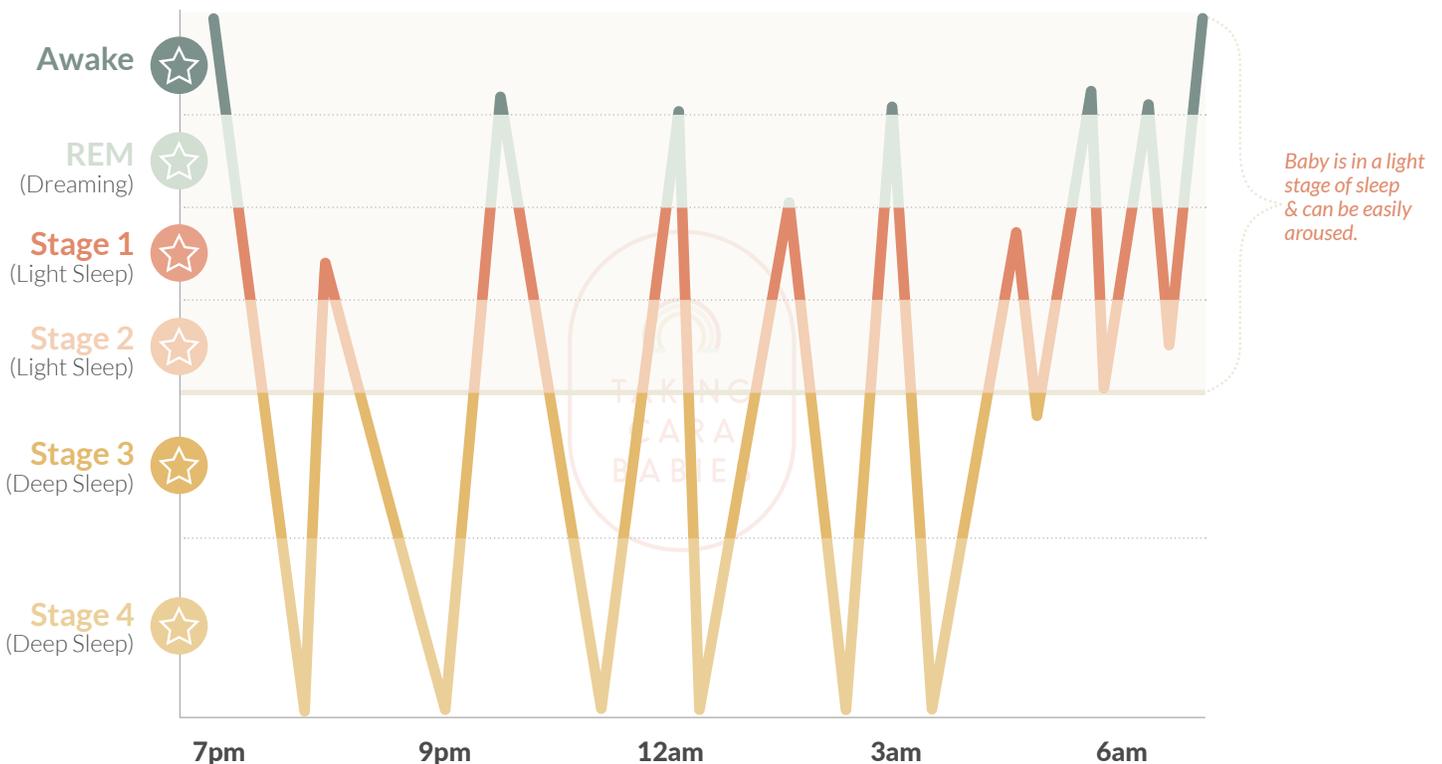
Your baby's **NEW** sleep cycles look much more like yours as an adult: with 5 different stages.

- **REM:** Dreaming Sleep
- **Stage 1:** Very light/drowsy sleep
- **Stage 2:** Light Sleep
- **Stages 3/4:** Deep Restorative Sleep

These new light stages of sleep mean that your baby now comes to a natural wake-up or near wake-up every hour or two throughout the night. Every time a baby gets back to those light stages, he has an opportunity for a complete wakeup. (See the chart below.) This is the same thing that happens with you as an adult: you wake up briefly, check in with your surroundings, and if all is well, fall right back to sleep. But that's the problem: you, as an adult, know how to "fall right back to sleep." There's a good chance that your baby doesn't have this "falling back to sleep" skill yet OR he doesn't yet know how to apply it to these more frequent and complete wakeups. Cue the crying!

Because this sleep cycle change is the permanent shift to more adult sleep patterns, the "just survive this stage" mantra doesn't seem quite right. It only delays dealing with this new phase of sleep and, depending on what you do to "survive the phase," it can often add other sleep obstacles to overcome.

Thankfully, there is an alternative to surviving this stage. That's what I've put together in this guide! So even though this sleep cycle change is permanent, your lack of sleep doesn't have to be.



So, how can you help your baby to keep traveling forward during this time?

Follow These 7 Steps

to help you to successfully navigate the next few weeks/months.

