Caring for Your Child
Sleep Problems: Infants

About 20% to 30% of infants and young children have a hard time falling asleep and/or they wake up at night. In most cases, these types of sleep problems can be fixed by establishing healthy sleep habits. All babies (and children and adults!) wake several times during the night, which is normal. It is important to know that whatever your baby needs to fall asleep is what he will likely need to return to sleep following these normal night wakings. For example, if your baby falls asleep with a bottle, it will be difficult for him to return to sleep without a bottle during the night. For this reason, you may want to teach your baby to fall asleep independently at bedtime.

**Newborn to Three Months:**

- Babies should sleep on their backs.
- Babies at this age will rarely sleep through the night without waking.
- Babies need to be fed throughout the day and night.
- Feeding cereal will not help a baby sleep through the night.

**Three Months to Six Months:**

Babies at this age may still wake at night, and some may still need a nighttime feeding. This is the perfect age to start developing good sleep habits, which will help your baby start sleeping through the night at an early age and prevent later sleep problems.

Establishing good sleep habits:

- Put your baby to bed at the same time every night, on his back.
- If possible, your baby should sleep in the same place each night.
- Keep the room quiet and dark.
- Develop a bedtime routine that is the same every night.
- If feeding is part of the bedtime routine, make this the first step, before a bath and changing.
- Put your baby down to sleep while still awake.
Seven Months to One Year:

Babies at this age can sleep for long stretches at night. Usually, they do not need a nighttime feeding. Babies do need a set early bedtime and a consistent bedtime routine every night.

Getting your baby to sleep:

- Try to put your baby to bed at the same time each night.
- If possible, your baby should sleep in the same place each night.
- Keep the room quiet and dark.
- Develop a bedtime routine that is the same every night.
- If feeding is part of the bedtime routine, make this the first step, prior to a bath and changing.
- Put your baby down to sleep while still awake.
- Your child should not sleep with a bottle. This will harm developing teeth.
- If your child uses a pacifier, put several in a pile in one corner of the crib and show your baby where these are.

If your baby wakes up at night:

- Check to see if your baby is in pain or needs to be changed.
- To let your baby know that it is still time for sleep, keep the room quiet and dark.
- Avoid cuddling or playing with your child.

Call Your Doctor or Nurse Practitioner if:

- Your baby seems to be in pain
- Your baby has a fever or looks sick
- Your baby snores or seems to have trouble breathing during sleep.

If you have any questions of concerns, please call us at ________________________.