

# Info-sheet Drowsy State

## Drowsy (Transitional) State

The drowsy state is known as a transitional state as it occurs as babies are moving either towards sleep or waking up. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell if your baby is trying to wake up or go back to sleep, if you think they may be trying to wake up speak in a soft voice and see if they open your eyes to see you. The drowsy state is an important part of the natural sleep cycle.

<b>Body movements/activity</b>	Variable activity level with mild startles and occasional smooth movements
<b>Eye Movements</b>	Eyes occasionally open and close, may appear half open
<b>Facial Movements</b>	Often none the face often appears still
<b>Breathing Pattern</b>	Irregular
<b>Level of response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They react to stimuli although their responses are delayed</li> <li>• A change to a quiet or active alert state following crying after stimulation is often observed</li> </ul>
<b>What this means for caregiving</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To awaken babies, you can provide something for the baby to see, hear or suck i.e. a dummy</li> <li>• If babies are left alone without stimuli they may return to sleep</li> </ul>	

### Supporting Transitional States

- If you think your baby is trying to go to sleep reduce the lighting and noise
- If you are unsure if they are trying to wake up wait a few minutes to see if they return to sleep or not

Information in this information sheet has been modified from the following sources:

- Blackburn, S., & Blakewell-Sachs (2003). Understanding the Behavior of Term Infants. White Plains, NY: March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, and [https://www.marchofdimes.com/nursing/index.bm2?cid=00000003&spid=ne\\_s1\\_1&tpi](https://www.marchofdimes.com/nursing/index.bm2?cid=00000003&spid=ne_s1_1&tpi)
- Caring for your baby in the Neonatal Unit: A parents handbook (2014) Inga Warren and Cherry Bond