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The New Contented Little Baby Book: The Secret To Calm And Confident Parenting



Synopsis

You've just had a baby. Everything is perfect. Then the hospital sends you home without an instruction manual. Baby expert Gina Ford comes to the rescue with her newly revised hour-by-hour, week-by-week guide. One of Great Britain's top parenting experts, she draws on more than twenty years of experience researching and studying the natural sleep rhythms and feeding patterns of babies to ease the stresses and worries of new parents. In this new edition, you'll find everything you need to know to get your newborn to sleep through the night. In addition, Ford shares her expertise on feeding schedules, colic, crying, teething, illness, pacifiers, separation anxiety, and setting up the perfect nursery. With this easy-to-follow guide, Ford will have your whole family sleeping through the night happily and peacefully in no time.

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Customer Reviews

The advice in this book should come with a strongly worded health warning: it can be DANGEROUS for breastfed babies. Trying to follow Gina Ford's routine can lead to not establishing a good milk supply -- or reducing the milk supply once it is established -- and babies consequently not putting on weight and growing as they should. Ford expresses sympathy with women who want to breastfeed their babies, and gives some partially accurate advice for establishing a good milk supply in the early days. However her book is riddled with so many inaccuracies that if you try to follow it "to the letter", as she insists you must, it is inevitable that you will have to provide top-ups of formula before your baby turns one, whether you want to do this or not, or risk damaging your baby's health and growth. Ford is very critical of "feeding on demand" (less judgementally known as "baby-led feeding") and blames it for all sorts of behavioural and sleeping problems. She proposes a feeding

schedule instead. She rightly points out that health professionals advise women to "feed on demand" because this is the only way to ensure that a baby gets as much milk as she needs. What she fails to address is how her feeding routines can ensure that a baby will get enough milk to meet his needs. Here are just a few of the problems with Ford's breastfeeding advice:

- 1) For women whose babies are having sleep problems, she recommends that you express your milk at a usual feeding time on the theory that this will show you how much milk your baby is getting. **WRONG.** A woman's body responds to her baby in a different way than to a pump, and breastfed babies are more efficient at getting milk from the breast. Expressing will **NOT** tell you how much milk your baby is getting.
- 2) Ford states that feeds need to be spaced 3 hours apart because it takes the baby this long to digest breastmilk, so feeding more often than 3-hourly may cause gas problems. There is **NO** scientific evidence to support this belief. And if you examine Ford's routines, some of her feeds are scheduled 3 hours apart. If it takes the baby 1/2 an hour to finish a feed, this leaves only 2 1/2 hours in between feeds for it to be digested. So even Ford's routines don't adhere to this schedule. (Incidentally, a windy baby may breastfeed more often because this helps to **RELIEVE** wind.)
- 3) Breastfed babies who are fed as often as they wish to feed, do not need any additional fluids during hot weather, because the composition of breastmilk changes -- thus more foremilk is available to naturally increase their intake of fluids. The key however is to feed the baby as often as they wish. Breastfeeding on a schedule could lead to a baby becoming dehydrated in hot weather. Ford never addresses this possibility. (Giving water between feeds is not the answer, as this can fill up the baby's stomach and reduce their hunger, thus replacing some of the breastmilk which he or she needs for optimum growth.)
- 4) To avoid the "inconvenience" of feeding more often when a baby is going through a growth spurt, Ford recommends having a stock of expressed breastmilk available so that you can just give the baby more milk at his usual feeding times, rather than feeding the baby more often. There are two problems with this. Firstly, the composition of breastmilk changes over time to keep pace with the growing baby's needs. Furthermore, when a baby feeds more often it signals to the mother's body that the baby needs more milk, thus increasing her supply. Continuing to feed on a rigid schedule during a growth spurt may mean that the milk supply does not increase adequately to meet the baby's needs.
- 5) At one point in this book Ford states that a feed from one breast "can be classed as" half a bottle feed. Though her wording is vague, this seems to indicate that she believes a baby feeding from one breast is receiving the same amount of milk as a bottlefed baby who drinks half the milk in a bottle. This is an absolutely ridiculous idea, and suggests that mothers should be restricting breastfeeds in a completely arbitrary way to bring them in line with the number of times a bottlefed baby would be fed.
- 6) Ford says that once protein has

been introduced at lunchtime, a baby no longer "needs" a milk feed at this time and that the milk will interfere with the absorption of iron from the protein. This is true of dairy products, but not of breastmilk. The iron in breastmilk is far more readily absorbed by the baby than that in dairy products (including formula). Dropping the breastfeed at lunchtime -- especially if the baby still needs and wants it -- will thus reduce the amount of iron that the baby gets overall.⁷) As the baby grows older Ford recommends dropping breastfeeds so that by the time the child is one, they are only receiving two breastfeeds per day, in the morning and at night. This is not consistent with the recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics and breastfeeding experts worldwide that breastmilk should remain a baby's primary source of nutrition for all of the first year. Furthermore, once a baby is only breastfeeding twice a day, the mother's body is receiving the signal that a baby is almost weaned, and therefore only needs a small quantity of milk -- which in most cases will not be enough to enable the baby to sleep through the night, thus leading to the night wakings that Ford's routine is designed to avoid at all costs. Ford's advice may well be suitable for bottlefed babies. However she is very ill informed about the physiology of breastfeeding, and for her to offer such inaccurate advice on breastfeeding is highly irresponsible and potentially dangerous for the health of babies. I would recommend that both she and her publisher seriously consider amending future editions of this book to state that its advice is only suitable for bottlefed babies.

UPDATE:; I wrote the review below after using TCB with my son, who is now 2 1/2 (and still sleeps all night!). I just had a baby daughter, and am compelled to write again because last night, at 7 1/2 weeks, she slept through the entire night for the first time. This book is not a fluke. I will say, however, that it is VERY important that you read the entire book and not just start with the schedules. There is a method to the madness, and it is important to understand what you are trying to achieve with the schedules (fit most of child's nutritional needs in during the day, and sleep needs in during the night). Remember that Ford is writing a book for the 2 million + babies out there, so her conclusions are what GENERALLY works for MOST babies. Every baby is different. That's another reason to read the entire book carefully -- there are some very important pieces of information buried in the text, in the Q&A sections, and in the case studies, which address problems people have had with the schedule and suggestions to fix them (e.g., what if you have a "sleepy" baby, or a "hungry" baby? What if baby keeps waking up even after getting a little older? What if you get off-schedule due to outings, etc., in the early days?). I will say that there is nothing "radical" about her schedules -- I sent my son to day care at 3 months and guess what? They had a scheduled morning nap, and a scheduled afternoon nap. Babies will tend toward this routine on their own, the

book just helps you to get them along a little faster. Oh, and I have had no problem bonding with my kids on this schedule -- in fact, I am so well rested I enjoy them thoroughly!_____ This book was a godsend. I think it goes without saying that you will be unable to follow Ford's schedules to the minute, but by giving you a general pattern, she gives you some predictability to your day. I honestly am very puzzled by the people who claim that this book somehow suggests that you starve your baby. Did they read the book? She gives you target feeding times, and suggests that you feed when he's hungry, but slowly stretch out the feeding times (by 5 minutes a day) until you are at the suggested times. In effect, she is supporting the "feeding on demand" theory -- she's just helping you to structure your child's day so that he is "demanding" to be fed at certain times. Put it this way: I followed this schedule while breastfeeding and my son was (and is) consistently in the 90th percentile for height and weight!! I put my son on the schedule at 5 weeks. We had to work hard to keep him awake for the first few weeks so that he would nap at the proper times and at night. Almost immediately he started sleeping from 7-10:30pm very easily, giving me and my husband a real evening back -- we could eat dinner, watch movies, and email, like the old days. He continued to wake up once at night (around 3:30) after the 10:30pm feeding until about 10 weeks, but after that he began sleeping from 11pm to 7am. Best of all, thanks to Ford's suggestions we never got him hooked on a pacifier, or rocking, or any other sleep association -- we put him in the crib wide awake and he babbles to himself until he falls asleep (and plays quietly in his crib in the morning until we come get him)! One note -- heed Ford's warning about trying to put this plan into effect only with a supportive environment. It does take focus and work, and my mother, who was staying with me at the time, was a total naysayer and constantly tried to sabotage me. However, I stuck with it, and after about a month even she had to admit that the schedule was working both for my son and everyone else. But it would have been A LOT easier if she had gotten on board from the beginning. Everyone we meet comments on what a happy baby we have, and I tell every pregnant friend I have to get this book. I watch my sister, who has three children who eat at different times of day and stay up to all hours -- she or her husband have to drive their youngest around in a car seat to get him asleep, and he still has a pacifier at 2 1/2 years old -- what a nightmare. She, like many of the other reviewers here, is convinced that this is just how my son "is," and her children would never be amenable to a schedule. Guess she'll never find out...her loss!

I'm a huge proponent of routines, so I thought this book would be right up my alley. The routines in the book are broken down in an easy to follow manner and are simply adjusted. However, now that

my child is in day care it's presenting more of a challenge. This book is great for stay at home moms who love routines.

This is a great guide for all parents looking for sanity. I prefer the original version to the new one though. As a bottle feeder the original version has information I can use vs. the new version being focused primarily on breast feeding amounts and timing.

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