

## PedsCases Podcast Scripts

This is a text version of a podcast from PedsCases.com on “**Consoling and Bundling Newborns.**” These podcasts are designed to give medical students an overview of key topics in pediatrics. The audio versions are accessible on iTunes or at [www.pedscases.com/podcasts](http://www.pedscases.com/podcasts).

### **Consoling and Bundling Newborns**

Developed by Cary Ma, Shirley Guan and Dr. Forbes for PedsCases.com.  
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#### Introduction

Hello everyone. My name is Cary Ma and I am a medical student at the University of Alberta. This PedsCases video was developed in collaboration with Shirley Guan, a medical student from the University of British Columbia, and Dr. Forbes, a pediatric hospitalist, associate professor and pediatric clerkship director at the University of Alberta and Stollery Children’s Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. This video will review techniques on consoling and bundling infants.

#### Case

Let’s begin with a case! You are a third-year medical student on your Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) rotation, and your preceptor asks you to examine a newborn infant. After completing a thorough newborn physical examination, the infant starts crying. How are you going to manage this situation?

#### Learning Objectives

At the end of this video, the learner will be able to:

1. Console an infant using various technique, and
2. How to safely swaddle an infant.

#### Information

Infants cry for various reasons and it is their form of communication with the rest of the world. They may cry when they are hungry, cold, seeking attention, uncomfortable or disturbed during a physical examination.

When examining an infant, especially in the NICU, it is important to leave the infant just the way they were found or in a better state. Since it is not uncommon for infants to cry during or after a physical examination, I want to share some techniques on consoling infants that you may find helpful. First of all, ensure there are not any factors that would make the infant

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uncomfortable, including wet or dirty diaper, hunger or cold. If the infant is still crying, consider using some of the following strategies to console them. When an infant is crying, you may place a pacifier in their mouth. The sucking reflex initiated by the pacifier often calms them down. Another way of consoling a crying infant is by gently patting their chest, abdomen and/or back to provide them with comfort and attention. Remember to be gentle as infants are delicate. Another strategy that you may employ is gently picking up the infant, while supporting their head, and gently cradling them back and forth. If the parents are around, you may ask them to pick up their baby and let you examine the baby in their arms.

The next technique we are going to talk about is known as swaddling. Swaddling essentially is wrapping an infant as what some people refer to as a “baby burrito”. Wrapping an infant snugly in a blanket resembles the feeling of a mother’s womb and is found to be an effective method to help babies calm down and fall asleep.

There are numerous approaches to swaddling an infant, but we will describe one method in this video. The steps are as follows:

1. Lay out a blanket on the bed in a “diamond” configuration. If possible, try to use a warm blanket.
2. Fold the top corner towards the center.
3. Place the infant on the blanket such that the edge created by the fold is slightly above the level of the infant's shoulder.
4. Fold the left corner across the infant while ensuring that the left shoulder and upper extremity is tucked in. The left upper extremity may be kept parallel with the infant’s body or it may cross their midline. Tuck in any remaining fabric underneath the infant.
5. Fold the bottom corner of the blanket towards the middle while ensuring that the infant’s lower extremities are snug but still has enough room for some movement.
6. Fold the right corner across the infant while ensuring that the right shoulder and upper extremity is tucked in but note that some infants may prefer it left free. This should create a V-shape around the infant’s neck. Tuck in any remaining fabric underneath the infant.
7. Make sure the infant’s airway is clear.
8. Lastly, place the infant back on his or her back.

When swaddling an infant, it is crucial to minimize the number of creases on the blanket because creases and folds may cause discomfort to the infant.

Note: please do not swaddle babies who are old enough to roll over.

### Case

Let's return to the case! You place a pacifier in the newborn infant's mouth and she stops crying as soon as she starts sucking on it. You then proceed to swaddle the infant as you had previously unwrapped her during the physical examination. Your preceptor and the NICU nurses commend and thank you for consoling the crying infant.

## Conclusion

This brings us to the end of the podcast. Here are a few take-home points:

1. Infants cry for various reasons, including when they are hungry, cold, seeking attention, uncomfortable or disturbed during a physical examination.
2. Some techniques for consoling a newborn include placing a pacifier in their mouth, gently patting their chest, abdomen or back, cradling them back and forth and swaddling them.

Thank you for watching this PedsCases video! I hope you found this video educational!

## References

[https://utswmed.org/medblog/practice-safe-swaddling-sleeping/?fbclid=IwAR0\\_j9mQUVPKemd2ke4rVooKXJ1w116-gM32t8-PrsvInKSCzb3ItEvyzro](https://utswmed.org/medblog/practice-safe-swaddling-sleeping/?fbclid=IwAR0_j9mQUVPKemd2ke4rVooKXJ1w116-gM32t8-PrsvInKSCzb3ItEvyzro)