



Shaken Baby Syndrome

What is shaken baby syndrome?

Shaken baby syndrome is a medical term for the injuries caused by violently shaking an infant. Shaking can lead to permanent brain damage and even death. Shaken baby syndrome does not result from gently bouncing an infant in play.

Sometimes babies are shaken by babysitters, but most often it is done by an adult living in the baby's home. Caretakers usually do not intend to hurt the baby. Shaking generally happens when an adult is angry and loses control.

What are the symptoms of shaken baby syndrome?

A baby who has been shaken may:

- Be sleepy
- Be fussy
- Not eat well
- Vomit
- Have seizures
- Stop breathing off and on
- Be unconscious.

Even if babies look normal right after the shaking, they may eventually have problems such as:

- Blindness
- Hearing loss
- Developmental delay (delay in walking and talking)
- Problems with speech and learning
- Seizures
- Trouble paying attention and remembering things.

How can I prevent shaken baby syndrome?

- If you find yourself getting annoyed or angry with your baby, put your baby in the crib and leave the room. Take a time-out. Call someone for support.
- Do not hold your baby during an argument or fight.
- Do not leave your baby with someone who is angry, drinking or using

drugs, or who seems violent.

- Only use childcare providers who are licensed. Check their references before you leave your child with them.
- Never shake a baby.

*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.