

Shaken Baby Syndrome  
Prevention, Detection & Action



# Prevention

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During the past two decades, facts about the dangers of shaking babies have become clearer. Sometimes a young child's crying or need for attention can be more than parents or caregivers can handle. Perhaps in frustration, the child is shaken back and forth in a "whiplash" motion. This is shaken baby syndrome.

25-30% of shaken baby syndrome victims die. The remaining survivors may suffer from one or all of the following:

- Permanent brain damage
- Cerebral palsy
- Paralysis
- Seizures
- Blindness
- Deafness
- Severe learning and behavioral problems
- Permanent vegetative state

The Shaken Baby Alliance of Wisconsin, Inc., suggests the following steps to protect your family against shaken baby syndrome:

- Make a plan for what to do if your crying baby causes you stress, frustration or anger. Put your child in a safe place, such as a crib or playpen, and walk away until you are calm.

- Ask your child's care providers if they are aware of shaken baby syndrome. If they are not aware, show them this pamphlet.
- Do not hesitate to "drop in" on your care providers. Do this as frequently as possible.
- Tell any person who takes care of your child to "never shake my baby" and why. Show them this pamphlet.
- Be mindful of who you leave your baby with. Watch the care provider in different situations.
- If you see someone being rough with a baby, talk to them and tell them what can happen if children are not handled gently.
- In searching for a pediatrician, question his or her knowledge of shaken baby syndrome. If you have a pediatrician, question them as well. If they are not aware, show them this pamphlet. Their awareness is important in the detection and treatment of shaken baby syndrome.
- Ask your pediatrician if they would be willing to educate themselves and others about shaken baby syndrome.

## Detection

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The Shaken Baby Alliance of Wisconsin, Inc., suggests that if your child has any of the following symptoms, see your physician immediately:

- One or both of their eyes do not follow movements
- One or both of their eyes are crossed
- Poor sucking or swallowing
- Unexplained lethargy, sluggishness or listlessness
- Unexplained vomiting
- Seizures/convulsions
- Loss of consciousness
- Unexplained or long periods of irritability
- Inconsolableness
- Decreased appetite
- Difficulty breathing
- High pitched cry
- Stressful sounding cry
- Stiffness of any part of their body

## Action

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The following are suggestions from the Shaken Baby Alliance of Wisconsin, Inc., on the action to take in the event that shaken baby syndrome strikes your family:

- Seek immediate medical attention and ask for a fundoscopic exam (examination of the eyes).
- Understand that anyone who has cared for your child could be responsible for shaking your child.
- Seek the help of a counselor or clergy.
- Get a complete history of the child's and care provider's activities.
- If shaken baby syndrome is detected, your medical provider will contact the appropriate authorities.
- Be honest and cooperative with investigators.



Call 1.888.722.9410 or visit our website at [www.shakenbaby.com](http://www.shakenbaby.com). The Shaken Baby Alliance of Wisconsin, Inc.

A State Chapter of  
The Shaken Baby Alliance 