

PRESS RELEASE

UBMC Educates Parents on Infant Crying & Shaken Baby Syndrome

The Period of Purple Crying

November 3, 2014: During the month of November, UBMC is raising awareness about Shaken Baby Syndrome, and what is commonly referred to as "The Period of Purple Crying".

Shaken Baby Syndrome is the leading cause of child abuse deaths in the United States. Nearly all victims of SBS suffer serious health consequences and at least one of every four babies who are violently shaken dies from this form of child maltreatment.

The fact is that crying—including long bouts of inconsolable crying—is normal developmental behavior in infants. The problem is not the crying, it's how caregivers respond to it. Picking up a baby and shaking, throwing, hitting, or hurting a baby is never an appropriate response.

The *Period of PURPLE Crying* is an evidence-based program to help parents and caregivers understand this normal increased crying in healthy infants and prevent abuse; namely, shaken baby syndrome. The word "PURPLE" is an acronym to help parents and caregivers recognize and remember the characteristics of normal infant crying. The word "PERIOD" means the crying has a beginning and an end.

"P" is for "Peak of Crying". –Your baby may cry more each week, the most in month 2, then less in months 3-5.

"U" is for "Unexpected". –Crying can come and go and you don't know why.

"R" is for "Resists Soothing". –Your baby may not stop crying no matter what you try.

"P" is for "Pain-Like Face". –A crying baby may look like they are in pain, even when they are not.

"L" is for "Long Lasting". –Crying can last as much as 5 hours a day, or more.

"E" is for "Evening". –Your baby may cry more in the late afternoon and evening.

Christy Thacker, UBMC OB Department Manager, states "Most parents leave our hospital knowing that their baby will cry, but most aren't prepared for the duration of crying and the frustration that is often associated with certain periods of infant crying. Frustration with a crying infant is the highest contributor to shaking or abusing an infant. It is very important that we educate our parents and caregivers so they know this period of intense crying will end."

All babies go through a normal period of increased crying in the first few months of life. This increased crying typically begins at about two weeks of age, peaks in the second month of life, and becomes less in the third or fourth month. Some infants cry more than others, and in some infants you may not even notice the increased amount of crying, but ALL infants do cry more during this period.

Infants also cry when they are sick, hungry or uncomfortable. Parents and caregivers should always make sure their infant's needs are met. If a parent or caregiver believes there is something wrong with their infant, they should have them examined by a healthcare professional.

Christy Thacker, UBMC OB Department Manager, states "In order to raise awareness about *The Period of Purple Crying*, we have partnered with the *CLICK for Babies* initiative which provides purple caps for newborns and promotes educating parents and caregivers about normal infant crying, how to cope with crying, and the dangers of reacting to crying in frustration by shaking or harming an infant. During the month of November, every baby born at UBMC will be given a purple hat."

In conjunction with the *CLICK for Babies* initiative, UBMC Volunteers contributed resources and time to provide over 300 purple caps to distribute to new parents to help raise awareness. The purple caps are a reminder that *The Period of Purple Crying* is normal and will come to an end.

For more information regarding the Period of Purple Crying, please visit www.purplecrying.info.



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Uintah Basin Healthcare is a community not-for-profit healthcare system, serving the Uintah Basin since 1944. Today, Uintah Basin Healthcare is the largest and most comprehensive rural-based healthcare system in the state of Utah.