

Moogling



TWILNS

...while keeping your balance



Can you believe that some mothers deal with twice the amount of mothering that you do? Well its true, and these mothers are busy, busy, busy. Baby Specialist and Twin Expert Jo Tantum has experience with double trouble, and she has advice for mothers dealing with double nappy changes, two mouths to feed...

Well firstly – congratulations on having twins! – although there will be challenging times ahead there is nothing more magical than two babies smiling , gurgling and chatting to each other!

Enjoy – it's so worth it!

Having one baby seems to take up all your time, so when you have two you really wonder how you ever have the time to get dressed, have something to eat or even get out of the house, maybe you think that you will never achieve any of these things!

Well hopefully I can help you with some great ideas and tips that will make life easier and not so overwhelming, and of course the best bit of all – how to achieve more than a couple of hours sleep!

Routines - essential if you have twins!!

Having a routine for twins is a sanity saver for parents. It means that your babies get enough milk, especially during the day when they can sleep for long periods. Which is obviously very important. Also it means that you then have some much needed time for yourself, or siblings.

As your babies will probably be low birth weight and be very sleepy, you will need to feed them every 2 ½ to 2 ¾ hours. Then when they reach 7lbs they can go onto a three hourly routine. Some babies who have been in SCBU will be on a four hourly feeding program, and will need to be put on a 3-3 ½ hourly pattern as they will not be able to go for four hours without a feed, when they get bigger and more hungry.

My recommended routine rules:

*A routine is not a dictator, but a guide.

*Your routine is flexible and you can make adjustments if and when you need to. You can vary the times by 15 minutes either way.

*All my routines are based on babies natural feeding and sleeping patterns, so you can choose which routine will suit your babies better.

This is what a three hourly routine looks like:

Feeds	Naps
7am	8 / 8.15am
10am	11 / 11.15am
1pm	2 / 2.15pm
4pm	5 / 5.15pm
10.30 / 11pm	

Routine tips

Keep a log of babies feeding, sleeping and patterns, also dirty nappies, that way you can see your babies progress and if a baby is grizzly you can look at your log and work out why; whether it is constipation, hunger or tiredness.

Your babies will be very sleepy, wake them up and change their nappies 15 minutes before a feed.

Feed your babies at the same time, put them down for their naps at the same time. This way you will get time in between to relax or even get showered and dressed! Luxury!

If you are breastfeeding feed the smallest baby first, someone else can feed the other baby with half feed of expressed breast milk, then swap. Or you can alternate which baby has a breast feed at each feed, this way you can bond with each baby. You could also try feeding them together but someone will have to help pass them to you and latch them on.

If you are bottle-feeding your twins, you can feed them on a pillow side by side together. Or using two reclining chairs side by side of you while you sit on a cushion in between them.

Sleep - yes you can still get some with twins!

For at least the first two weeks your babies will be very sleepy. Which is why it's very important to follow this pattern.

PLAY – FEED – PLAY – NAP

This is because then your baby will not associate feeding with going to sleep which later on will cause sleep issues. Your baby will not learn to fall asleep by himself which is a very important lesson for babies to learn as they will use it time and time again in the day and night to put themselves back to sleep.

Also babies are capable of one long sleep in 24 hours, which of course you want your baby to take it when you are having your long sleep 11pm-7am. You can encourage this by waking them for feeds in the daytime and giving them a dream feed around 10.30-11pm.

Many babies get day and night confusion. Days are about noise, people talking, telephone ringing, radio on, and light. Night is about quiet, whispers, low light. This way your baby will soon start to wake more in the day and be sleepy at night.

Sleep tips

Swaddle your babies day and night, this will help them sleep more and stop them waking themselves by their startle or moro reflex. Firmly swaddling your baby in a light material has been proven to help babies sleep longer and more deeply. They will soon associate swaddling with sleeping. It makes them feel secure and sleepy.

Put your twins in a moses basket or cot together, they have been together for the last nine months and have created a bond. Your baby will find that they will in fact comfort and quieten each other, and will be oblivious of each other others' crying.

Put you babies in a quiet room for daytime naps, then they will sleep better. Closing the blinds/curtains will also help them sleep. Blackout is very important for sleeping in the first two years as light stimulates babies.

Money saving

No you don't have to buy two of everything! In fact you may even save money. With twins sleeping together you can put them together straight into a cot, so have no need for a moses basket. You will only need one baby bath. But I would suggest buying two reclining chairs as you will use them a lot especially when feeding two.

Money saving tips

Buy supermarket brand nappies for the daytime and then more expensive absorbent ones for the nights. Buy nappies and formula in bulk.

Borrow as many things as you can off family and friends and cut corners on items that you can afford to. Use cotton wool and water rather than harsh expensive wipes. Use olive oil for very dirty nappies and for massage. Go on Ebay or NCT websites for cheap and second hand equipment.

Join a twins club in your area as they will usually have equipment and clothes that have hardly been used to give away. And they will provide you with much needed support and advice.

For more help, see Jo's book *Baby Secrets*. Available at Amazon.co.uk. You can see her on stage in October at The Baby Show – Earl's Court, London.

Learn more about Jo Tantom and how she can help you at www.babysecretsltd.com



To win a copy of Jo's book *Baby Secrets* email your contact details to info@keychoiceltd.com, subject: Jo Tantom.