

## Infant Stress

Babies experience stress if they are not raised in loving, stable environments. Lack of adequate care may result in delayed development, increased illness and in extreme cases death.

### **Infants may feel stress when:**

- Hungry
- Receiving too much attention/stimulation
- Lacking attention/stimulation
- Lacking secure attachments with adult caregivers
- Around adults who are stressed
- Their security is threatened

You can reduce or avoid stress by understanding that babies:

- Need lots of energy in order to grow.
- Can grow tired learning about their world.
- Sense the emotional climate around them.

### **Points for Action**

#### **Help your baby grow well in the first months:**

- Provide conditions for adequate sleep.
- Allow frequent feedings.
- Provide a healthy diet when solid foods begin.

#### **Help your baby cope with over stimulation:**

- Provide quiet times away from other people.
- Avoid bright lights when baby is in the room.
- Avoid loud or startling noises.

- Remember that taking the baby on outings is good for you both, but extra activity may require that the baby sleeps more.

#### **Help your baby feel safe and secure:**

- Respond quickly when your baby cries
- Show your love with a warm touch: cuddling, rocking, hugging.
- Talk, sing, and say rhymes to your baby.
- Have fun together during bath time.
- Move baby around with you as you go through daily routines.