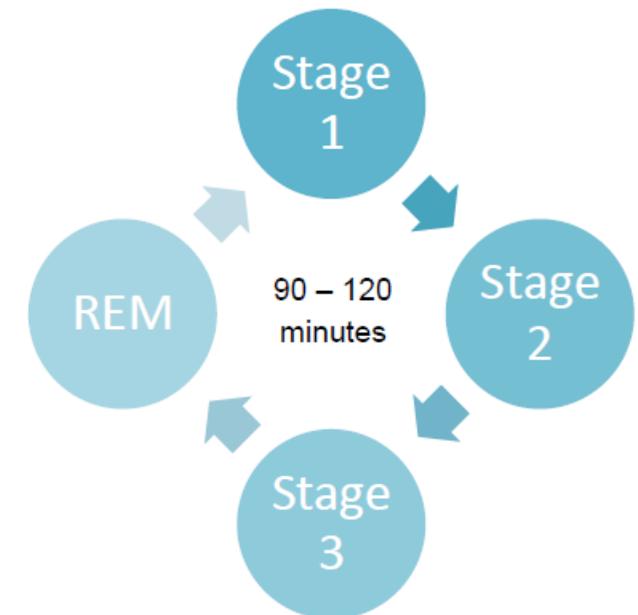


0-19 Service

Your toddler's sleep at 1 to 2 years



- Take the opportunity to read or use headphones to listen to relaxing music while you are waiting for them to settle.

Stages of sleep

Stage 1 – in this stage we experience a light transitional sleep. This is where drowsiness and sleep begin.

Stage 2 – more stable sleep occurs. Chemicals produced in the brain block the senses making it difficult to be woken.

Stage 3 – this is deep sleep. Growth hormone is released during this stage. Most stage 3 sleep occurs in the first third of the night.

Stage 4 – Rapid Eye Movement (REM).

REM

This is where your eyes move around quickly behind your eyelids and your brainwaves look similar to those of someone who is awake.

Your toddler's development

Between the ages of one and two years your toddler will:

- Learn how to walk, run, kick and throw balls
- Learn how to use their new skills to build towers, start making marks on paper and explore messy play

- Start to say single words and communicate their needs by pointing at objects and making noises
- Become more independent and want to do things for themselves. It is not unusual for toddlers to challenge set routines and resist bedtimes.

Useful links

<https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/>

<https://www.basisonline.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/getting-baby-to-sleep/>

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.

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Quality first and foremost

Your sleeping toddler

On average, your toddler will sleep anything from 11 to 14 hours in a 24 hour period.

By 12 months of age your toddler may be having one or two naps a day; the total nap time is usually between two and two and a half hours. However, some children will sleep a lot less and may nap more during the day.

At around 18 months your toddler's napping time may reduce. Most children stop napping between the age of three and four years but every child is different.

Your toddlers sleep cycle will increase in length to 60 minutes. Some children fall deeply asleep, whilst others sleep lightly, fidgeting and muttering for around 20 minutes before finally falling asleep.

Children will wake briefly at the end of each sleep cycle - some children will call out when they wake.

On some occasions, your toddler will be able to settle themselves back to sleep without your support, as they may not have actually woken up fully. On other occasions, when crying is increasing, they may need more support to settle back to sleep, which is very normal.

Remember, all children are different with their own personalities; some will sleep longer than others.

Bedtime routine

Have a regular bedtime routine is important, this could include:

- Having a bath
- Dimming the lights
- Closing the curtains or blind
- Reading a bedtime story together.

Avoid using screens, such as iPads, smart phones, computers, televisions, one hour before sleep, as the light from the screen can interfere with the production of melatonin; this is the hormone that makes us feel drowsy.

Always end the day with praise and happy thoughts.

Trouble settling down

The excitement of learning new skills, such as learning to walk and talk, can affect your toddler's sleep pattern.

Artificial lighting can stimulate your toddler's brain making it more difficult for them to fall asleep.

Consider staying in your toddler's room for a while if they need the comfort of you being there when they are settling to sleep at night.

If your toddler becomes distressed when you attempt to leave, try staying in their room longer and offering more comfort. This may take time - this is okay and will resolve.

Gradually reduce the amount of time you are in your toddler's room.

Ideas to support you and your toddler

- Keeping a regular day and night-time routine could help your toddler tune into their natural body clock.
- Getting up at the same time each day is recommended. If your toddler is still asleep, treat it like a daytime nap - open the curtains, let some fresh air in if the weather is appropriate and carry on with your normal day.
- Take your toddler out and do lots of things you can both enjoy, such as a walk in the park or activities at your local library and children's centre.
- Consider blackout curtains or thicker curtains in your toddler's room during the summer months.
- Have quiet time an hour before you start your toddler's bedtime routine. Activities can include reading together, drawing and puzzles.
- Put your toddler to bed when they are tired - you do not want them to be too alert and active, and not overtired either, both of which can make falling asleep take longer.
- Make yourself comfortable whilst your toddler is settling down to sleep.