

The Benefits of Babywearing - Summarised Version

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Babywearing = balancing you and your baby's needs.

Babywearing is an instinctive parenting style where a baby is held close to the parent in a sling or a pouch for a substantial part of the day. It allows a busy parent the freedom to continue their normal daily routine while providing the richest and most desirable environment for their child.

BENEFITS FOR BABIES

EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- Increases parent-infant bonding
- Babies feel safe and secure
- Carried babies are comforted by hearing the parent's body rhythms
- Decreases the levels of stress hormones circulating in the baby's blood stream
- Reduces crying and fussiness by up to 51%
- Carried babies fall asleep quickly and will usually sleep deeper and for longer periods
- Sling babies are less clingy because they are more secure, confident and self reliant.

PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS

- Increases baby's cardiac output, improves circulation, promotes respiration and aids in digestion
- Reduces symptoms of colic and reflux
- Enhances motor skills by stimulating the baby's Vestibular System (balance organs)
- Develops the muscles needed for the infant to sit, stand and walk.

COGNITIVE BENEFITS

- Carried babies see and experience the world, they participate with their parents, develop their senses faster, cry less, learn more and thrive better because they are less bored and more relaxed
- Babies spend a lot more time in a "quiet and alert state" when carried – the ideal state for learning.
- Stimulates brain development and expands their future learning potential.

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS

EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- Increases parent-infant bonding
- Increased confidence in ability to care for baby
- Increased freedom of being able to look after your baby while still carrying out other necessary tasks, like looking after siblings
- Increased freedom to go out even while your baby is asleep in the sling
- Increased sense of control
- Increased ability to cope with the new stress and emotion of having a baby
- Reduces risk of post-natal depression.

PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS

- Increased breast milk supply by being in close contact with your baby
- Parents are not weighed down by prams, making outdoor exercise easier and therefore more likely
- Parent's muscular strength develops in relation to the baby's growing weight.

COGNITIVE BENEFITS

- Parents learn to understand baby's cue faster in closer contact, giving parents greater confidence.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Vital Touch: How Intimate Contact With Your Baby Leads to Happier, Healthier Development by Sharon Heller