Introducing Solids to Help a Baby Sleep

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I have a patient who is breast feeding her 3 month old baby. The baby is quite long for his age and doesn’t sleep through the night because he allegedly gets quite hungry. The nurse recommended supplementing the breast milk with Pablum to fill him up so that he can sleep thru the night. What do you think? Is Pablum good stuff?

First, Pablum, is a vitamin enriched cereal developed by three doctors at Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children in 1930: Alan Brown, Theodore Drake, Fred Tisdall. It’s a mixture of wheatmeal, oatmeal, cornmeal, wheat germ, brewer’s yeast, bone meal and alfalfa. Royalties went into research for hip dislocations, “blue baby” heart defects and scoliosis.¹

Looking at the ingredients of pablum—it is mostly grains, a food type which requires a certain digestive enzyme for proper assimilation. Until babies cut their first teeth, they do not produce the digestive enzyme amylase—the enzyme necessary to assimilate whole grains. Whole grains, therefore, become a dead weight and overall burden to their digestive system.

Processed grains are congestive and also overload the infant’s developing digestive system. Additionally, both wheat and corn are grains which have a high allergic reaction and it is not advisable to introduce them until much later. ²

If a mother feels it is absolutely necessary to supplement a baby’s diet because breast milk is “not providing enough”, two easily digestible foods are avocados or bananas. Peeled and mashed, either food can be introduced slowly and separately without overloading the baby’s digestive system.

One point to keep in mind however, is that by supplementing, the baby will nurse less often and therefore decrease the mother’s milk supply. Decreasing breast milk will further affect the baby’s nutritional, immunological and emotional needs from being met.³

Documentation shows that regular chiropractic and cranial care improves infant sleep patterns.⁴ Stress to the nervous system is a frequent cause of difficulty in sleeping. When considering what causes a baby to have sleepless nights, it is important to make sure there is no interference to the baby’s nerve system resulting in undue stress.
Finally, babies innately crave constant touch and comfort. They are accustomed to being inside the mother provided with continued warmth, touch and security. When they are born, they expect no less. Often, however, parents separate their babies by using car seats and cribs for carrying and sleeping. This separation is a source of anxiety for the baby and is not meeting their innate needs for comfort. This anxiety may cause irregular sleeping patterns as well. Carrying and co-sleeping both provide infants with a sense of emotional ease and improved sleep. Parents today need to reassess the modern practices of separation and reestablish the practices of constant contact and touch that human beings require for normal, healthy development.