Settled Beneath the Surface

a parent guide to colic, reflux, feeding, and your baby's nervous system

Crying for hours. Arching. Spitting up everything.

"He cries for hours every evening, and nothing helps." "She arches and screams during every feed." "Latching has been a battle since day one." If you are exhausted, worried, and running out of ideas, you are not alone, and you are not doing it wrong.

A baby who can't settle is often a baby whose nervous system is stuck on alert. This guide explains that layer in plain language and gives you gentle ways to help at home.

01

Settling, sleeping, and digesting happen on the BRAKE

Even newborns have a gas pedal and a brake. The brake, rest-and-digest, is how a baby feeds well, digests, and drifts into deep sleep.

GAS	BRAKE
Fight-or-flight.	Rest-and-digest.
Tense, crying, hard to settle.	Calm, feeding well, sleeping.

Birth is a big event for a tiny body. A long labor, a fast delivery, a C-section, or the use of vacuum or forceps can leave tension in the neck and spine and a nervous system stuck on the **GAS**. That can show up as crying, arching, gas, and trouble latching. Helping the body shift into **BRAKE** helps a baby settle.

02

What a baby stuck on the gas can look like

Crying	Hours of inconsolable crying, often in the evening. Hard to soothe.
Feeding	Trouble latching, clicking, favoring one breast, or short, frustrated feeds.
Reflux & gas	Spitting up, arching during or after feeds, gassy and tense belly.
Body	Arching the back, tight neck, prefers turning one way, flat spot on the head.
Sleep	Short naps, wakes often, only sleeps when held or upright.

Some of these need medical care. Please keep your pediatrician in the loop, and call them right away for fever, poor weight gain, forceful or green vomiting, blood in the stool or spit-up, fewer wet diapers, or a baby who seems very sick or hard to wake. What we add is one more question: **how is this baby's nervous system regulating?**

03

How a foot gets stuck

We group the stressors that load a nervous system into what we call the Three T's:

Traumas

PHYSICAL

A long or fast labor, C-section, vacuum or forceps, position in the womb.

Thoughts

EMOTIONAL

A stressful pregnancy or birth, a NICU stay.

Toxins

CHEMICAL

Medications during labor, antibiotics, formula changes.

Often it is several stacked up at once: a stressful pregnancy, a hard birth, then colic and reflux in the first weeks. We call that the start of the **Perfect Storm**. None of this is anyone's fault, and it is never too early to help.

04

Seven gentle ways to help your baby settle

These are not a treatment. They lower the load on a system that is already working hard and help the brake engage.

1. **Hold upright after feeds**
   Keep baby upright for 15 to 20 minutes after feeding.
2. **Burp often**
   Pause to burp halfway through feeds, not just at the end.
3. **Lots of tummy time**
   Short, frequent sessions while awake help the neck and gut.
4. **Try bicycle legs**
   Gentle leg bicycles and knees-to-tummy can help move gas.
5. **Use skin-to-skin**
   Your heartbeat and warmth help a baby's nervous system calm down.
6. **Get feeding support**
   A lactation consultant can help with latch, and we work alongside them.
7. **Care for you too**
   A calm, rested parent helps a baby settle. Ask for help.

05

What we actually do

We don't diagnose or treat colic, reflux, or tongue-tie.

We measure how the nervous system is regulating. Then we use gentle, specific adjustments to help it shift out of GAS and into BRAKE.

How we measure. Our INSiGHT scans are gentle, painless, and safe for newborns. They look at how a baby's nervous system is handling stress.

Alongside your team. We work alongside your pediatrician, lactation consultant, and any provider treating tongue-tie, not instead of them.

06

Is your baby’s foot stuck on the gas?

Does your baby…

- ○ Cry for long stretches and resist soothing
- ○ Arch the back during or after feeds
- ○ Spit up often or seem uncomfortable after eating
- ○ Struggle to latch or favor one side
- ○ Prefer turning the head one way
- ○ Have a flat spot on the head
- ○ Only sleep when held or upright
- ○ Have a history of a long, fast, or assisted birth or C-section

If you checked more than a few, a scan can show you what is happening underneath.

> *“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.” Isaiah 66:13*

Your baby was made to rest, eat, and grow.

The next step is a New Patient Experience: about an hour with one of our doctors, a gentle exam, and INSiGHT scans that are safe for newborns.

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This guide is for education only. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose, treat, or cure any condition, including colic, reflux, or tongue-tie. Chiropractic care at our practice focuses on nervous system function. Please talk with your baby’s pediatrician about any symptom, diagnosis, or medication.