

CHILD SAFETY BLOG

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Muscle Spasms: Uncommon but Dangerous Condition in Infants

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Infantile spasm is an uncommon condition in babies between 4 to 8 months that, if untreated, can lead to irreversible brain damage. Babies suffering from the condition stop developing and can even regress. They can lose abilities to sit, babble or roll over. Although infantile spasm is a serious condition, it is often misdiagnosed as gas or colic because its symptoms mimic these other less serious problems.

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Infantile spasm (IS) presents itself in the form of muscle contractions. Different from other conditions, IS occurs in clusters: “Babies can have clusters of 100 spasms or more at a time, dozens of times a day,” according to [Jeanne Milsap in her article](#) for Sun-Times Media. Milsap describes the spasms as “a sudden bending forward of the body with stiffening of the arms and legs. Some babies arch their backs. Most typical are little flexion jerks similar to the startle reflex.”

IS can be diagnosed simply with an EEG that would show chaotic brain waves. It is treated with anti-convulsants, hormonal injections, diet change, or surgery in more serious cases.

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