

HIPpocrates

Eugene Schoenfeld M.D.

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QUESTION: My wife had her first baby about a month ago and a couple of days after they returned from the hospital the baby began crying every night at about nine and usually continued until my wife finally fed him again around midnight.

We tried everything to stop the crying feeding him, burping him, changing his diaper, changing his position in the crib, walking around with him, rocking him and nothing helped. According to Dr. Spock, the baby had a very common ailment, known as colic, which could last until he was 3 or 4 months old. He also said that there was very little the parents could do about it.

One of the things I'd noticed when checking to see if the baby needed his diaper changed, was that he occasionally had an erection. I remember reading in an Evergreen magazine about six months ago, that there was some tribe in Africa where it was a common practice for the mothers to masturbate their babies in order to calm them down when they cried.

So, whenever the baby cried, I tried rubbing his penis. He always fell asleep within 10 to 20 minutes, no matter how long he'd been crying. Is it possible that I could give the baby some far-out sexual hang-ups by doing this?

ANSWER: When I received your letter I consulted with a hip psychiatrist friend who somehow became a Novice at an Orthodox (as opposed to Conservative or Reform) psychoanalytic institute. He thought his Training as a priest would undoubtedly say something was wrong with what you were doing, but my friend wasn't sure what effects it would have on your baby later in life.

You mentioned that the mothers in that African tribe soothed their babies with this method. Babies are more aware than we realize. We know that all little boys go through an Oedipal period in which the mother is a love-object. Maybe your baby will grow up wanting to ball you instead of his mother.



Dr. Eugene Schoenfeld speaking at Community Arts Auditorium, May 28, 1969 at a benefit for Open City.
Photo: Alan Gotkin.

QUESTION: I read today of a method used by midwives on "blue" babies to start their breathing. It is by massaging a group of nerve ends that can be reached up the rectum.

Can you tell me more about this practice and also if it would be effective in cases of halted breathing caused by drowning or shock? I have two small children and thought this knowledge most useful.

ANSWER: I think the method you describe might increase a person's respiratory rate (especially if you come upon him unexpectedly) but am unaware of its usefulness as a resuscitatory device. Could you tell me the source of your information?

Recommended first-aid treatment in cases where breathing has stopped is to apply mouth-to-mouth breathing. Tilt the head of the patient backwards, apply your mouth to his and breath about 20 times a minute. If the patient is an adult, pinch his nostrils so that air will not escape. If the patient is a small child or an infant cover his mouth and nostrils with your mouth. Use only the force of your puffed cheeks to expand the lungs of infants and small children. If air is reaching the patient's lungs you will see his chest expand and contract.

Call the police or fire department immediately in order to summon prompt medical attention.

QUESTION: My girlfriend and I rely on a vaginal foam to stifle the stork. I have noticed that after about a half hour of vigorous, uninterrupted intercourse, that a large pile of foam appears on the bed.

The amount is so great that it worries me whether or not there can be enough left in the proper place to be effective. Are my worries justified or don't things work that way?

ANSWER: Even if you didn't work yourself up into a lather your chances of conceiving a child are increased if you use a vaginal foam rather than contraceptive, pills. or a diaphragm. Vaginal foams however, are certainly more convenient and probably as effective as condoms. Vaginal foams, by the way, need not be inserted immediately before sexual intercourse ("the pause that depresses").

A former secretary spurned forth the information that she uses a double dose of foam for safety's sake.

QUESTION: During making love, my boyfriend wants me to not move. This is impossible when I'm coming. After intercourse, he won't hold me or let me touch him. He even hurt me during lovemaking because I breathed loudly and made noise. What can be done about it?

ANSWER: Your boyfriend may be a necrophiliac. Ask him to do the same.

Dr. Schoenfeld welcomes your questions. Write to him c/o The Fifth Estate.

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