

Night Terrors



Cardinal Pediatrics
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What are Night Terrors?

Night terrors are dreams during deep sleep from which it is difficult to awaken your child. They occur in 2% of children and are inherited. Despite being distressing to the parents, they are not triggered by psychological stress in the child. They are associated with being overtired.

Fast Facts

- Begin 1-2 hours after going to sleep
- Last 10-30 minutes
- Occur in children between ages 1-8 years old
- Are described as the child being restless and upset, but cannot be awakened or comforted. He or she does not seem to realize that you are there, even if he is looking right at you.
- May cause child to scream or run around the room in an agitated manner

Scarier for Parents than for the Child!

Your child will not
remember the event in
the morning -
although you will!

During the event

- Try to help your child return to normal sleep by turning on the lights and speaking calmly and repetitively, telling him that "You can rest now. You are at home. It's ok." Don't try to wake the child up.
- Direct your child back to bed to avoid injury.
- Explain to babysitters ahead of time what to expect.

To prevent night terrors

- Encourage naps and consistent sleep with a set bedtime.
- Use prompted awakenings. Awaken your child 15 minutes before the expected time of onset of the night terrors for 7 nights straight. Make sure she is completely awake for about 5 minutes, then put back to bed. This method helps to reset the sleep cycle.



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Remember we are only a phone call away!