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Helping Sleepy Angels Get Their Rest!

Transition from 2 naps to 1

How do you know when your toddler is ready to switch from 2 naps to 1? There are several signs that you will notice that will tell you that he is ready:

- 1) He is consistently sleeping 11 hours through the night
- 2) He is between 15-18 months old
- 3) He will take a long morning nap and then refuse his afternoon nap
- 4) He will take longer to fall asleep for the morning nap, which will push the afternoon nap later, and then bedtime is going to be off
- 5) He will only take a very short morning nap

Now that you are ready to make this transition to one nap per day, you will need to be prepared that it can take 2-3 weeks to do so more smoothly. You will likely find that 1 nap is not enough but 2 naps are too many; here are some tips to help you through:

Take a deep breath and remember this too shall pass!

To start with you are going to bump his morning nap later and later until we see about 12:30-1pm for the start of the nap. You are going to be flirting with the 2nd wind while shifting this time back; experiment to see how much you can push it back each day. Typically, you could see about 30min every 2 days will work well.

During these days you will still need a 'back-up' nap in order to keep the window from the end of the nap until bedtime between 3.5-4 hours. This 'back-up' nap may only be 20-30min - that is OK. It is only a bridge to help you get to bedtime without being overtired. Bedtime will fluctuate according to the length of the naps and the timing.

A great way to make this transition smoother is to do a pattern of 1 nap for 1 day, 2 naps for 2 days, repeat once. Next you will do 1 nap for 2 days, 2 naps for 1 day, repeat once. Now you will be ready for 1 nap day. You will want to see this new nap be $2\frac{1}{4}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours long. After this transition you will need to trust your instincts and be prepared for the odd 2 nap day. That does NOT mean you are going back to 2 naps a day; you are just flexible and going by his needs.



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****** It is very important to keep in mind how quickly you can get into a vicious cycle of less sleep = less sleep. Please watch for your little angel being overtired and watch for the sleepy cues. Less sleep in the day will get you all less sleep at night.******

An early bedtime will be a must to help avoid this terrible cycle. If you start to see crankiness all day, early rising in the morning, and increased wake-ups in the night - these are signs that your child is sleep deprived. You will need to catch up on the naps to have better success at night and then continue with the transition when your little angel is ready.

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