

## Your Baby's Movements

### Why should I monitor my baby's movements?

Your baby's movements indicate its wellbeing. Ensuring you know the importance of monitoring will help you work with your maternity team to promote a healthy outcome. We wish to empower you with the confidence to be able to call for advice if you are ever worried about your baby's movements.

If you notice your baby is moving less than usual or the pattern of movement has changed, it could indicate that your baby is unwell and it is vital that you contact your midwife or local maternity unit so your baby's wellbeing can be assessed.

### What are normal movements for my baby in pregnancy?

Most women are aware of their baby moving when they are 18-20 weeks pregnant. As your baby develops you will soon notice patterns of movement and learn what is "normal" for your baby. You will feel your baby's movements as punches, kicks, swooshes, flips and turns. Hiccups are not classified as movements.

The number of movements generally increases until 32 weeks of pregnancy where they stay the same. **The movements should not slow down towards the end of pregnancy.** You should be aware of your baby's movement's right up until the start of labour.

### What will affect me feeling my baby move?

You are less likely to notice your baby moving if you are busy. If your placenta is lying at the front of your womb, it does not affect the pattern of movements. Alcohol and smoking may affect your baby's movements.

You will also notice triggers that cause your baby to move, these could be a cold drink, lying in a certain position or certain foods. This will help reassure you if you ever become worried about your baby's movements as you should be able to quickly trigger your baby to move.

### What should I do if I am unsure about my baby's movements?

If you are unsure, you should lie on your left side and focus on your baby's movement for two hours. If you do not feel ten or more separate movements, you should contact your midwife or delivery suite.

### What should I do if I feel my baby's movements are reduced or changed?

Always seek professional help immediately if you feel your baby's movements are reduced or changed. This will either be by contacting your midwife or local maternity unit. Do not go to sleep concerned about your baby's movements.

If you have further episodes of reduced or changed movements, you must again immediately contact your local maternity unit. Never hesitate to contact a healthcare professional for help, no matter how often.

You can also get further information about fetal movements from [www.kickscount.org.uk](http://www.kickscount.org.uk)

Triggers that make my baby move