

**Information on feeling your baby move**

**Get to know your baby**

Your pregnancy is now so advanced that you feel the baby kicking. During pregnancy, we monitor the growth and condition of your baby, but you, as the mother, know your baby the best before he is born. What the baby is telling you with his movements is important information!

After the birth, you will spend a great deal of time caring for the baby. We recommend that now, during the pregnancy you spend some time each day becoming familiar with the movement pattern of your baby. Here you will find information on what the kicking of the baby means and some tips on how you can check his well-being. It is good practice to take time to get to know your baby!

**What does your baby do?**

Your baby is active throughout the entire pregnancy. He moves to allow the lungs to develop. Your baby is practicing for life outside the womb. From time to time he will have hiccups; they will feel like small contractions. Your baby will make violent and less violent movements in your uterus. You will probably not feel the small movements such as thumb sucking or the stretching of his fingers. In the third trimester, you feel the most kicks and nudges. If you change position you may also feel the baby move more, for example if you go from a sitting to a lying position.

**What does feeling the baby kick say about his well-being?**

Your baby gets everything it needs from you through the placenta. As long as the placenta is functioning properly, the baby will kick well. If the placenta function decreases, the baby will move less to save energy. You will notice that the baby is kicking less. If the placenta is malfunctioning, the baby will not grow or will grow less well and his condition may deteriorate. Your baby may also encounter problems during delivery. This rarely happens if your baby has a normal movement pattern! If you feel the movements of the baby as you are used to, that is a sign that your baby is okay.
Sometimes your baby is calm. It is important to notice if he kicks less than you are used to. By consciously feeling the movements, you have contact with the baby and you will get to know him. Therefore, it is good to consciously experience the movements.

**Sometimes it is quiet**

Your baby sleeps a lot. Then, he will hardly move at all. The periods of sleep will be longer as the pregnancy progresses, but even towards the end of pregnancy, your baby will rarely sleep more than an hour at a time. Most babies are especially active in the evening, although some prefer early morning exercise. There may be significant differences between healthy babies, how often and how hard they kick. Kicking includes all kinds of movements. Research shows that girls kick as often as boys. Babies who kick a lot before birth are more active after birth. Some mothers feel less movement than others. If the placenta is at the front of the uterus, or if you are overweight, you feel fewer baby movements. You can learn to monitor the movements by feeling if your belly is moving. You can feel the movements the best when you are lying down and the least when you are standing, walking, or doing something.

**Learning to recognize movements**

It is a good habit to consciously recognize your child's movements every day. Kicking is important for all expectant mothers, learning to recognize the movements of your baby should start between the 26th and the 28th week of pregnancy.

All movements count as a 'kick', except the hiccups. Different movements at the same time should be considered to be one kick. The best way to experience a child moving is to lie down and relax or sit and concentrate on the movements. If your baby is asleep, you can wake him up by pushing a bit or by gentle pressure on your stomach. Try to recognize the child's movements every day at about the same time. Do this when the baby is usually active. During this time of day, you try to be aware of the child's movements. Most mothers will thus need little time to learn to recognize the movements and realize that the baby is moving normally.

**How much should your baby be kicking and what to do when the number of movements decreases**

If, during two weeks (26-28 weeks), you have consciously felt the child's movements, you will probably realize that kicking varies somewhat from day to day, but is also largely similar. This will be the case for a child in good condition, even if the way you feel the movements changes during pregnancy. It is important to note if there is a clear and permanent reduction in the normal activity of your baby. If you're worried about your baby, you should notify us.

In some cases, you have to contact us immediately:

* If the baby has not moved for one day. If this happens, NEVER wait until the next day.
* If, in the course of the day, you feel that the baby's movements are decreasing and you do not feel enough activity.

If in doubt about what is 'too little activity', it may be useful to know that it rarely happens that a healthy child moves less than 10 times within a two hour period, when previously he was generally most active during that time.