

KJENN LIV (FEEL LIFE)

TIPS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN ON HOW TO MONITOR YOUR BABY'S MOVEMENTS

Feeling your baby's kicks and movements every day is a sign that the baby is doing well.

All babies have different patterns of movement. How and how much they kick and move varies a lot from baby to baby. There is no set standard for what is normal. Don't compare yourself to others. Get to know *your* baby's movements. Trust your instinct – you know your baby best.

THE BABY'S MOVEMENTS

We often say that we feel the baby kicking, but fetal movements are not just kicks. They also include gentle nudges and the sensations you feel when the baby stretches or turns around. You won't feel all the baby's movements, and how much each woman is able to sense also varies. Hiccups are not counted as movements but are nevertheless a healthy sign.

Most women start to notice their baby's movements around week 18-20 of their pregnancy, but this can vary a lot. From around week 25-30, the movements start to become more predictable, with periods when the baby is awake and when it's asleep and not moving.

The movements will increase in number and intensity from mid-pregnancy and until week 32. At this point, they often stabilise at a level that will last until the birth. It is also normal that they become more intense throughout the pregnancy.

The movements feel different towards the end of the pregnancy when the baby has less room to move around. However, the movements should not become less frequent or weaker.

HOW CAN YOU MONITOR YOUR BABY'S MOVEMENTS?

Set aside time each day to feel your baby moving when it's awake. Make it a habit! In this way, you will more easily notice any changes. It also strengthens your attachment to your baby and helps you prepare for your role as a mother.

Start in week 28. You can also start a bit sooner if you like, but the baby's movements do not normally become regular until week 28. Find a time of day when your baby is awake. It

doesn't have to be the same time every day – what matters most is that the baby is awake, as they don't usually move while sleeping.

It can help to lie on your side. The flow of blood to the womb and placenta is best in this position. You can feel the baby's movements better when lying down, rather than standing or moving around.

For some, it's enough to make a mental note of the baby's movements, while others find it helpful to note down the movements more systematically.

Concentrate on the baby's movements for about 15 minutes. You'll know if you need more or less time to get a good impression of the movements.

These questions can help you with the monitoring:

- How strong are the movements?
- How is the baby moving?
- How much is the baby moving?

You should be able to answer the following questions after monitoring movements:

- Can you clearly feel the baby's kicks and movements?
- Are the movements as strong as usual?
- Is the baby moving in the same way as usual?

You might like to keep a diary of your baby's movements (here's one way you can do that: [My Baby's Movements \[PDF\]](#)).

The baby moves around throughout the day and night. You can monitor their movements more than once a day if you want to, or if you're unsure whether the movements have changed.

DECREASED FETAL MOVEMENTS

Decreased movements can be an indication that the baby is not doing well. The most important indication is that you yourself feel less movement or that the movements are weaker.

Contact the maternity ward at once if you feel less movement. Don't wait until the next day! Your concerns will be taken seriously.

Are you unsure about whether your baby is moving less than usual?

Lie down on your side and pay attention to your baby's movements. Make sure that you are somewhere quiet so that you can fully concentrate on the movements.

- If you do not feel any movement from the baby in the course of one to two hours, contact the maternity ward immediately. Let them know that you've been monitoring the baby's movements, so you're not asked to repeat that before coming in for a check-up.
- If you feel less movement and/or weaker movements than is usual for your baby in the course of one to two hours, ring the maternity ward at once. If you don't know what's usual for your baby, a rule of thumb is that a healthy baby rarely moves less than ten times in the course of two hours during a period they're usually awake.
- If you're still concerned and uncertain about the baby's activity pattern, phone the maternity ward for advice. Trust your instinct – you know your baby best.
- If you feel plenty of movement and feel more calm, you do not need to contact the maternity ward.

Most mothers who experience an episode of decreased movements have straightforward pregnancies and give birth to healthy babies.

Never hesitate to contact the maternity ward! No matter how many times you've experienced decreased movement, always get in touch.