



Awareness of Baby Movements

An active baby is usually a sign of a healthy baby.

You will start to feel your baby move about 24-26 weeks of pregnancy. Some people feel baby movements much earlier.

Baby movements change as the baby grows.

- At first it feels like a fluttering or butterflies.
- As your baby gets bigger, the movement changes to feel more like kicks, or jabs. Kicks are your baby's head, arms, or feet bumping against you.
- Sometimes you feel rolling movements.
- Your baby may hiccup. Hiccups are normal but are not movements. They may feel like a jerking or pulsing jump.
- Near the end of pregnancy, you will still feel your baby move. There may be less kicks and jabs. There may be more rolling movement. The type of movement may feel different, but this is normal if you still feel good movement. This is because the baby has less room to move around.

How much does baby move?

Babies move every day. There are no set number of movements— each baby is different.

- baby can be asleep and not move as much for up to 40 minutes
- baby can be alert and moving a lot

If you are busy with other things, you may not feel the movements. You may feel the baby move if you lie down to rest.

Counting baby movements

An exact count of movements is not needed. If your baby is not well, they may be less active. If you feel your baby has less movements than usual,

- sit or lie down in a quiet comfortable position.
- have something to drink and go to the washroom.
- Place your hands on your tummy to help feel baby's movements.
- Sit quietly and focus on your baby.

If there are less movements than usual or the pattern of movements is different, contact your doctor, midwife or clinic right away. You can also go to your hospital's triage or assessment unit.



They will check you and monitor your baby's heartbeat. They will also ask you about any other changes in your pregnancy, if you have had a fall, or if you feel unwell.

Being aware of your baby and your baby's movements is important. Discuss any questions or concerns with your nurse, midwife or doctor.

References

Indications for Outpatient Antenatal Fetal Surveillance: ACOG. Committee Opinion, Number 828. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2021 Jun 01;137(6):e177-e197. (reaffirmed 2024)

Niles K.M., Jain V., Chan C., Choo S., Dore S., Kiely D.J., Lim K., Roy Lacroix M.E., Sharma S., Waterman E. (2023). Guideline No. 441: Antenatal fetal health surveillance. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of Canada: JOCG*, 45(9):665-667. E3.