

**We hope that this information has helped you to get to know and understand more about your baby's movements.**

It is important that this information be shared with partners, family and friends so that they too can understand the importance of fetal movements.

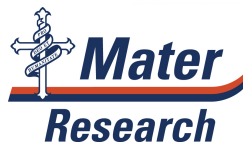
For further information visit: <http://www.stillbirthcre.org.au/> or ask your doctor or midwife for more information about your baby's movements.

**Contact us at:** [stillbirthcre@mater.uq.edu.au](mailto:stillbirthcre@mater.uq.edu.au)

### **Acknowledgments.**

This information brochure was compiled in 2010 and updated in 2016, by a multidisciplinary working group led by the coordinating center for the Centre of Research Excellence in Stillbirth, Mater Research Institute - The University of Queensland (MRI-UQ) in partnership with the Stillbirth Foundation Australia and the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Alliance (SANDA) of the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand (PSANZ).

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# Getting to know My Baby's Movements



## **Pregnancy—My Baby's Movements.**

This brochure provides information about the importance of getting to know your baby's movements during pregnancy.

### **What is my baby doing in there?**

As a mother, it is very exciting to feel your baby move. You will usually start to feel your baby move when you are between 16 and 22 weeks' pregnant. Women having their first baby may start feeling movements a little later than women having a subsequent baby. As your baby grows, you will become more aware of the movements. You won't feel small movements, such as thumb sucking or stretching of fingers and toes but you will feel your baby's arms and legs moving and other movements such as rolling and even hiccups.

### **What things might affect how I feel my baby's movements?**

Usually, an active baby is a healthy baby. Some women may not feel their baby move as much as others, even though their baby is healthy. Every baby is unique and it is important for you to get to know your baby's movement patterns. You may feel your baby's movements least while standing, walking or if you are busy with other things.

### **How much should my baby move: should I count kicks?**

Being aware of your baby's movement patterns each day is a very good habit to have during

pregnancy. Most babies have developed a pattern of movement by 28 weeks (the third trimester), which helps the pregnant mother to notice and also report changes to her care provider. You will feel movements best when you relax while lying down (on your side is best) or sitting down.

There is no need to keep a written record of your baby's movements, although some women might find this helpful. As a general guide most healthy babies move more than 10 times over 2 hours. Movements can include rolling, stretching, jabs and kicks. If you think your baby's movements have decreased in strength and/or number, contact your health care provider immediately. Do not wait until the next day.

### **Do healthy babies move all the time?**

Babies do not move all the time, even when they are healthy. All healthy babies will be quiet or sleep for short periods of time. To better understand your baby's wake and sleep cycles, imagine a healthy toddler running around and then having a regular daytime nap. This is normal behaviour for a toddler. But, if that toddler was to lie on the couch for a long time when they did not usually sleep, then it might mean that the toddler is unwell. Similarly, if your baby's movements change at a time when they are normally active, then there may be cause for concern.

### **Is it normal for my baby's movements to slowdown in the last few weeks before birth?**

No, your baby's movements should not decrease in strength or frequency in the last few weeks before birth. As you get closer to birth (after 36 weeks' gestation) there is less room for your baby to move. Because of this you may notice the type of movements you feel changes. Women often describe more rolling, squirming and pressing movements that are more forceful. You may also be able to feel movement of particular body parts, such as your baby's arms and legs.

### **What can I do if I am concerned about my baby's movements?**

If you are concerned about how often your baby is moving or the strength of your baby's movements, contact your care provider immediately. Your doctor or midwife will need to assess you and your baby's health.

### **What do I do if I have recurring concerns about my baby's movements?**

Remember you are the one who knows your baby's movements best. It is important that whenever you are concerned about your baby's movements to contact your doctor or midwife. Contact your doctor or midwife again even if you have already seen your care providers about your baby's movements.