

Feeling your baby move is a sign that they are well

Most women and birthing people start to feel their baby move between 16 and 24 weeks of pregnancy.

There is no set number of normal movements. Every baby is different.

From 16–24 weeks on you should feel your baby move more and more up until 32 weeks.

From then, movements should stay roughly the same until you give birth and during labour too.

Why are my baby's movements important?

Sometimes, a baby who moves less is not getting enough oxygen. A small number of babies who move less are stillborn (this means they die before they are born).

So it is important to get checked straight away even if your pregnancy has been straightforward or you have not had any problems before.

What if my baby is moving less after I have been checked?

Contact your maternity unit straight away. Do this even if you have been seen earlier the same day or were recently told your baby was well.

Always get checked, no matter how many times this happens.

I am not sure about movements, but I just feel that something is wrong. What should I do?

You know your body and your pregnancy best.

If you feel that something is wrong, contact your maternity unit and tell them you are coming in. You should do this even if you can't explain exactly why you feel that something is wrong.



Call your maternity unit and go to get checked straight away if:

- your baby is moving less than normal
- movements feel weaker than normal
- movements have stopped

- **Do not wait until the next day to get checked. The maternity unit is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week. You can call and get checked any time of the day or night.**

If you are away from home, you can contact any maternity unit.

- **Do not** do anything to try and make your baby move.
- **Do not** use home dopplers, hand held monitors or phone apps to check your baby's heartbeat. Even if you hear a heartbeat, this does not mean your baby is well.

Read more about your baby's movements in pregnancy



What will happen when I get checked in hospital?

If you do not get these checks and tests, you should ask for them. Show your midwife or doctor this leaflet.

If your doctor or midwife wants to do different checks, they should explain the medical reason why. You can still ask for the checks and tests in this leaflet too.

24 – 26 weeks pregnant

A midwife or doctor will:



listen to your baby's heartbeat



ask about your baby's movements



check your blood pressure



check your urine



check the size of your bump

26 weeks onwards

A midwife or doctor will **also**:



monitor your baby's heart rate and movements using a CTG monitor - a machine that is strapped to your stomach and shows your baby's heart rate.



What will happen next?

If your doctor or midwife has any concerns, they will talk to you about what should happen next.

You should not be sent home until:

- your baby's movements are reassuring to you
- any tests show that you and your baby are well at that time

If the tests show any problems, you should not be sent home without a clear plan.

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