



Frequently Asked Questions

What is *Count the Kicks*?

Count the Kicks is a stillbirth prevention public health campaign that encourages expectant parents to track their baby's movements daily during the third trimester of pregnancy and contact their healthcare provider right away if there is a change in what's normal for their baby.

Why is it important to track my baby's movements?

Counting your baby's kicks (and jabs and rolls!) is important because a change in movement in the third trimester is often the earliest sign of distress in a baby. When moms know what is normal for their baby, then they are more alert to potential red flags. We frequently hear from moms whose babies were saved because they noticed a change in their baby's movement pattern and alerted their healthcare provider.

Is stillbirth really still a concern in the US?

Unfortunately, yes. Across the US, approximately 24,000 babies are lost to stillbirth every year. Statistically, that means 1 out of every 167 pregnancies ends in stillbirth. For African American moms, that number is even more alarming – 1 in 94! *Count the Kicks* is committed to preventing stillbirth and eliminating disparities. In Iowa, where the campaign started, the stillbirth rate has dropped nearly 32% in 10 years! If this success is replicated in all 50 states, more than 7,500 babies will be saved every year!

How do I count my baby's kicks?

- Download the free *Count the Kicks* app in iTunes and Google Play online stores.
- Starting at 28 weeks count your baby's movements every day, preferably at the same time.
- Pick your time based on when your baby is usually active.
- To get started, sit with your feet up or lie on your side. Count each of your baby's movements (kicks, rolls, or jabs – but not hiccups, as those are involuntary) as one kick and tap the footprint on the *Count the Kicks* app. Keep counting and tapping until you reach ten movements. The app is timing how long it takes your baby to get to ten movements.
- Most of the time it will take less than a half hour, but each baby is unique.
- Save your kick counting sessions in the app to see your baby's movement history. After a few days you will begin to see what's normal for your baby (how long it takes your baby to get to ten movements).
- Knowing what is a normal amount of time for your baby is key. If **“normal” changes, call your healthcare provider** – this could be a sign of potential problems.
- Your kick counting history can be useful for visits with your healthcare provider.
- The app will record the amount of time it took to get ten movements, or you can log your times into a *Count the Kicks* chart, available at www.countthekicks.org.
- Keep counting every day!

What are the other benefits of *Count the Kicks*?

Counting baby kicks helps you to bond with your baby. Taking time to *Count the Kicks* provides a special time for you to focus on your baby's movements and personality. It is also a good time for your partner

and older children to share in this experience with you and bond with the baby.

My baby is always active. Why should I take time to *Count the Kicks*?

Active babies can also experience distress, sometimes quickly and without other warning signs. Tracking your baby's movement every day takes the guesswork out of knowing if your normally active baby has slowed down. You have real data to show your healthcare provider if you have a concern.

Why do I need to *Count the Kicks*? I'm past the first trimester; I should be out the danger zone.

One out of every 167 pregnancies ends in stillbirth, and 1 out of every 94 pregnancies for African American moms. Fifty percent of mothers who have lost a baby to stillbirth in the third trimester reported perceived gradual decline in fetal movement several days prior to the death of their baby. This indicates that many cases of stillbirth are not sudden. There may be time to save your baby if you are aware of the warning signs.

Why do I need to *Count the Kicks* when I can hear his or her heartbeat with a Doppler device?

A change of the baby's heartbeat is one of the last things to occur when a baby is in distress, whereas decreased movement is an early sign. Daily monitoring allows you to detect a change in your baby's movements. A significant change in your baby's movement may indicate potential problems before actual changes in the heart rate are detected. By the time the heart slows, it may be too late. The time between decreased movement and decreased heart rate may be the only time you have to save your baby.

At what point in my pregnancy do I start *Count the Kicks*?

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends you begin counting kicks in your 28th week, or at 26 weeks if you are high risk or pregnant with multiples.

What is considered normal?

Every baby is different. Keeping track of your daily kick counting sessions will help you know what is "normal" for your baby. Notify your healthcare provider immediately if there have been significant changes in your baby's movement pattern.

When should I contact my healthcare provider?

- Call your healthcare provider if your baby has a change in movement patterns.
- Do not wait if there are significant changes in your baby's movements, or no movement at all.
- When in doubt, contact your healthcare provider.
- **Do not worry about "bothering" them. It is their job to take care of you and your baby.**

Do babies kick less near the end of pregnancy?

NO! Toward the end of pregnancy your baby may move differently. You may feel less sharp kicking and more rolling. However, if you are monitoring the baby's movements at the same time each day, it should take about the same amount of time to feel 10 movements. Call your healthcare provider right away if you notice a significant change in your baby's movement patterns.

What should I do if I cannot feel my baby move?

Call your healthcare provider right away! Trust your intuition. Trust the data. Don't wait.

What does the latest research say about stillbirth prevention?

- Always sleep on your left side, research shows this is the best position for mom and baby.
- Pay attention to the strength of your baby's movements and notify your provider right away if your baby's movements become weaker.
- If you notice a sudden, wild surge in your baby's movement, it is another indication to call

your provider right away.