

## PATIENT INFORMATION

# Fetal Movements

Feeling your Baby Move is a Sign that they are Well

### Feeling your baby move is a sign that they are well

Most women usually begin to feel their baby move between 16 and 24 weeks of pregnancy. A baby's movements can be described as anything from a kick, flutter, swish or roll. The type of movement may change as your pregnancy progresses.



#### How often should my baby move?

There is no set number of normal movements.

**Your baby will have their own pattern of movements that you should get to know.**

From 16-24 weeks on you should feel the baby move more and more up until 32 weeks then stay roughly the same until you give birth.



It is NOT TRUE that babies move less towards the end of pregnancy.



You should CONTINUE to feel your baby move right up to the time you go into labour and whilst you are in labour too.

**Get to know your baby's normal pattern of movements.**

**You must NOT WAIT until the next day to seek advice if you are worried about your baby's movements**



If you think your baby's movements have slowed down or stopped, contact your midwife or maternity unit **immediately** (it is staffed 24 hrs, 7 days a week).

- **DO NOT** put off calling until the next day to see what happens.
- Do not worry about phoning, it is **important** for your doctors and midwives to know if your baby's movements have slowed down or stopped.



#### Why are my baby's movements important?

A reduction in a baby's movements can sometimes be an important warning sign that a baby is unwell. Around half of women who had a stillbirth noticed their baby's movements had slowed down or stopped.



Do not use any hand-held monitors, Dopplers or phone apps to check your baby's heartbeat. Even if you detect a heartbeat, this does not mean your baby is well.

**What next...see overleaf**

For more information on baby movements talk to your midwife



## What if my baby's movements are reduced again?

If, after your check up, you are still not happy with your baby's movement, you must contact either your midwife or maternity unit straight away, even if everything was normal last time.

**NEVER HESITATE to contact your midwife or the maternity unit for advice, no matter how many times this happens.**

### Contact details:

#### After 26 weeks

Always ring Maternity Assessment or Delivery Suite as you may need to be seen at the hospital not in the community.

**20 – 25 weeks** please contact your community midwife for advice.

#### Torbay

Mon – Sun 9-5	Maternity Assessment Unit	01803 656058
Out of hours	Delivery Suite	01803 654641

#### Exeter

8 – 8	Maternity Assessment Unit	01392 406540
Out of hours	Delivery Suite	01392 406650

### Please do not smoke in pregnancy

Evidence shows that smoking in pregnancy increases risk of premature birth, miscarriage, poor fetal growth, stillbirth and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Smoking Cigarettes



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#### Sources and acknowledgements

The information in this leaflet is based on RCOG Green-top Guideline No. 57 *Reduced Fetal Movements* (2011) and RCOG Patient Information Leaflet *Your baby's movements in pregnancy: information for you* (2012).

Thank you to the following organisations for supporting the development of this leaflet



For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

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