

Fetal Movement Count

One way to check your baby's health before birth is to count the number of times he or she moves in a certain period of time each day. This number is the fetal movement count. Babies do not move constantly. They may sleep and then wake up and move.

How to record fetal movements

- **Count fetal movements one or two times a day as instructed by your doctor or nurse.** Choose the time of day when your baby is most active.
- You may want to eat or drink something before counting fetal movements. Food can make your baby more active.
- Your baby may be more active if you move around shortly before doing counts.
- **Do not smoke.** Smoking is harmful to you and your baby. Smoking may make your baby less active for up to 90 minutes.
- Use a piece of paper and a pen to mark down movements.
- Rest on your left or right side. Get in a comfortable position.
- Look at a clock and write down the time you start counting.
- Each time your baby moves make a mark on the paper.
- Count all of your baby's movements – kicks, rolls, and big and little movements. Sometimes you can see a ripple or little bump on your abdomen when your baby changes position. Some women describe the movements as rolling, stretching or pushing. Each feeling of movement counts as one movement.
- If you cannot feel your baby moving on the inside, place your hands lightly on your belly and watch for movement.
- **When you have counted 10 movements in two hours, stop counting.**

When to call your doctor

Call your doctor or nurse if you:

- **Have less than 10 movements in two hours.**
- Notice a big change in movement. Tell your doctor or nurse when you last felt your baby move and if the movement changed slowly or suddenly. He or she may use other ways to check your baby, such as listening to the baby's heart rate or monitoring the heart rate pattern over time.
- Have any questions or concerns.