



Fetal Movement—Fetal Kick Count

Fetal activity is one of the most reliable and inexpensive ways to monitor fetal well-being. The fetus goes through periods of wakefulness and periods of sleep. Some fetuses are more active than others and more active at certain times than others.

Decreased fetal activity or cessation of fetal activity may be associated with fetal distress and should be investigated.

Fetal Movement Guidelines:

1. Once you begin to feel fetal movement, you should feel some movement every day.
2. The type of movement that you feel will change as the baby grows and changes positions.
3. Your baby should remain active until delivery. It is not true that the baby gets less active as delivery approaches.
4. Beginning at 28 weeks gestation you can monitor your baby's well-being by doing Fetal Kick Counts:
 - Begin a habit of counting your baby's movements EACH morning.
 - You should feel at least 10 movements (kicks, rolls, flutters, hiccups) in two hours.
 - Babies may be more active after you eat and drink (especially something sweet like orange juice), so do not skip breakfast.
 - If you have not felt 10 movements in two hours, lie down on your left side (this gives the baby the most oxygen) and drink some juice or have a snack.
 - Count movements in this position for one hour. If you do not feel at least 5 movements, call your doctors office.
 - You may be instructed to come into the office or labor rooms for a "non stress test." You will be placed on the fetal monitor to observe fetal heart beats and activity. This test is a good screening tool to assess fetal well-being.