

WHAT WILL THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER DO IF MY BABY'S MOVEMENT PATTERN HAS CHANGED?

The care you will be given when you report any concerns regarding your baby's movement will depend on how many weeks pregnant you will be at the time you present with any concerns :

Less than 24 weeks pregnant:

If by 24 weeks you have never felt your baby move, you should let your physician know who will check your baby's heartbeat. They will also arrange for an ultrasound scan, and you may be referred to a specialist in fetal medicine to check for your baby's wellbeing.

Between 24 weeks and 28 weeks pregnant:

- You should visit the Emergency Department check your baby's heartbeat.
- You will have a full antenatal check-up that includes checking the size of your uterus, measuring your blood pressure and testing your urine for protein.
- If your uterus measures smaller or larger than expected, an ultrasound scan may be arranged to check on your baby's growth and development.

Over 28 weeks pregnant

If you don't feel your baby move at this stage, please don't wait for your regular appointment. You must visit the Emergency Department immediately where you will:

- Be asked about your baby's movements.
- Have a routine antenatal checkup, including assessment of your baby's heartrate.

You will be advised to have a cardiotocography (CTG) to monitor your baby's heart rate, usually for at least 20 minutes. This will reassure you of your baby's wellbeing. Also, you will witness changes in your baby's heart rate as he or she moves.

An ultrasound scan will be done to monitor the baby's growth as well as the amount of fluid around your baby in situations when:

- Your uterus measures smaller or larger than expected.
- Your pregnancy has risk factors.
- The heartrate is normal, but you still feel that your baby's movements are less than usual.
- You have had previous episodes of altered fetal movements.

If any concerns are identified for your baby, you will be briefed about the situation. Follow-up scans may be arranged. You might also be advised to have your baby early depending on your individual situation and how far you are in your pregnancy.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I EXPERIENCE FURTHER CONCERNS REGARDING MY BABY'S MOVEMENT PATTERN AGAIN?

If you experience another episode of altered movements, you must again visit the ED immediately.

You should never hesitate to contact the Emergency Department for advice, no matter how many times this happens.



Patient and Family Education

patienteducation@hamad.qa

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ALTERED FETAL MOVEMENT



This Leaflet is to provide information regarding your baby's movements during pregnancy and advice on what to do if you feel your baby's movement pattern has changed and you are concerned about your baby's movement. It will tell you about normal movements for an unborn baby, the factors affecting how much you feel the baby move, and what to do if you feel that the baby's usual movement pattern has changed.

ALTERED FETAL MOVEMENT

Fetal movements during pregnancy may feel like anything from a flutter, kick, swish or roll. This type of movement, however, may change as your pregnancy progresses and as the baby grows.

“THE FIRST MOVEMENT”- HOW AND WHEN?

- You may feel your baby move as early as 16 weeks of pregnancy, but most women usually feel between 18 and 24 weeks.
- If this is your first pregnancy, you may not notice your baby’s movements until you are around 20 weeks pregnant.

WHAT CHANGES CAN I EXPECT IN MY BABY’S MOVEMENT?

As your pregnancy progresses, both the number and type of movements will change depending on your baby’s activity.

- Afternoon and evening periods are times of peak activity for your baby.
- During both day and night, your baby has sleep periods that mostly last between 20 and 40 minutes and are rarely longer than 90 minutes.
- You will not feel your baby move during this period of sleep.

The number of movements usually increases until 32 weeks of pregnancy and then tends to remain same, but you might experience a change in the type of movement as you get closer to your due date. Often, if you are busy, you may not notice all these movements. Most importantly, you should continue to feel your baby move throughout the duration of the pregnancy right up to the time you go into labour. You might even feel your baby move when you are in labour.

Get to know your baby’s normal kicks and movements.

DO NOT WAIT OR HESITATE TO VISIT the Emergency Department IF YOU ARE worried about your baby’s movements.

WHY IS MY BABY’S MOVEMENTS IMPORTANT?

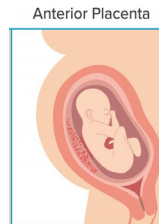
The movement of the baby is a sign that they are well. However, if you feel that your baby moves less or if you notice a change this can sometimes be an important warning sign that the baby is unwell.

{Therefore, it is essential that you visit the Emergency Department immediately so that your baby’s wellbeing can be assessed}.

WHEN MIGHT I NOT FEEL MY BABY MOVE?

You might experience fewer baby movements when you are:

- Active or busy.
- If your placenta is at the front of your uterus.



- If your baby’s back is lying at the front of your uterus.



If you think your baby’s movements have slowed down, stopped or changed contact the Emergency Department immediately.

Your baby’s position will not affect whether you can feel them move.

WHAT CAN CAUSE MY BABY TO MOVE LESS?

- Certain drugs such as strong pain relief or sedatives can get into your baby’s circulation and make your baby move less.
- Alcohol and smoking may also affect your baby’s movements.
- A baby may move less because he or she is unwell.

SHOULD I USE A CHART TO COUNT MY BABY’S MOVEMENTS?

Evidence does not recommend the routine use of a kick count chart. Your awareness of your baby’s pattern of movement is important throughout pregnancy. Visit the Emergency Department immediately if you feel there is an alteration in the pattern of your baby’s movements.

CAN I DO SOMETHING TO MAKE MY BABY MOVE?

No, you should not try to make your baby move. If you think your baby’s movements have slowed down, stopped or changed, visit the Emergency Department immediately.

NEVER HESITATE to visit the Emergency Department for advice, no matter how many times this happens.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY BABY’S MOVEMENT PATTERN HAS CHANGED?

Always seek medical advice immediately. Never delay seeking help when you have experienced an episode of altered fetal movement. Local home kits for fetal heart monitoring are unreliable in such conditions.