



Barnmorskemottagningar

Patientinformation: Fosterrörelser översatt till engelska

Datum: 2025-05-27

Foetal movements

What foetal movements feel like

Every baby has its own individual way of moving inside the womb. It is common to feel your baby moving for the first time sometime around weeks 18–20 of your pregnancy. Some people feel these movements earlier than this, and others later.

Your baby will alternate between periods of rest and waking. Periods of rest usually last for around 20–40 minutes, and rarely for longer than 90 minutes. It is common to experience most foetal activity during the evening.

A baby will make both large and small movements. These movements might feel like a flutter or a swish. In the beginning, it is common to feel small movements. However, as your baby grows larger, their movements might also become less subtle, and you might experience these as kicking or jabbing motions.

How much a baby moves inside the womb varies from child to child. While some are very active and others are calmer, all babies move around inside the womb right up to the time of their birth.

Ordinarily, it will be possible to feel your baby's movements clearly from around week 24 of your pregnancy, and you will notice when your baby is

awake. As your baby grows with each passing week, its movements will become more energetic up until around week 32 of your pregnancy. After that, its movements will remain roughly equally strong up until the time it is born.

Your baby will have less room to move inside your womb towards the end of your pregnancy. This can cause their movements to feel different than before; perhaps like a strong pushing sensation or as though your baby were stretching. Although some people perceive their baby's movements to be slower than they were to begin with, a baby's movements should not decrease in either strength or number.

Symptoms of reduced foetal movements

'Reduced foetal movements' means that a baby in the womb has become less active. In such cases, you will no longer notice that your baby has obvious periods of waking. You will experience a clear difference in the way your baby moves now compared with the way it moved before. To be considered reduced foetal movements, this perceived change must have lasted for longer than 2 hours.

When & where should I seek help for reduced foetal movements?

On weekdays during working hours you can contact your midwife clinic (*barnmorskemottagning*) or a maternity ward (*förlossning*).

During evenings and weekends/public holidays, please contact a maternity ward (*förlossningsklinik*) for advice on where to seek help.

If you have passed gestational week 24+0 and are seriously concerned about any decrease in your baby's movements, please contact a maternity ward (*förlossning*) directly.

Don't wait until tomorrow!

It is important that you always seek medical care in cases of reduced foetal movements. This applies even if you have sought care previously and the examinations showed that your baby was doing well at the time. Seek medical care again if you experience a new episode of reduced foetal movements.

If you need help finding the contact details for a maternity ward (*förlossningsklinik*), please search the 1177.se website or call the 1177 helpline.

How much attention should I pay to my baby's movements?

How strongly a pregnant person feels the movements of their baby inside their womb varies from person to person. Some people notice every tiny kick. Others are not as alert to the way their baby moves inside their womb.

Even as the person carrying the baby, there is no need to feel pressure to monitor your baby's every movement. You don't need to check how often your baby sleeps, nor interrupt your own sleep to poke your stomach to see if your baby wakes or not. Both you and your baby have your own individual habits and movements. It is not until a change occurs that you need to pay more than the usual attention.

What causes reduced foetal movements?

Reduced foetal movements can occur when the placenta stops working as it should. If this happens, there is a risk that the baby will receive too little nourishment and oxygen. There is an increased risk that your placenta's function will be reduced if you suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure or

obesity, or if you smoke tobacco or have passed your due date by one week or more, for example.

Examinations at a maternity ward

If reduced foetal movements is suspected, you will first speak with a midwife, who will ask you questions about your baby's movements. They might ask you how your baby's movements have changed and when you first noticed this change.

Some people who experience reduced foetal movements will need to have their baby's heartbeat monitored (CTG) and an ultrasound examination at a maternity ward (*förlossningsklinik*).

Most people who experience reduced foetal movements still give birth to a healthy baby. If the examinations described above show that a baby is not doing well, it may be necessary to deliver the baby earlier than expected.

Would you like to know more?

You are always welcome to contact your midwife clinic (*barnmorskemottagning*) if you would like more information about foetal movements.