



OMG Center for Women's Health

KICK COUNTS

Self-monitoring of fetal movements is a simple and important test that you can do yourself. The technique is easy and requires no prior experience or equipment. Kick counts are a helpful tool only after 27 weeks of gestation. If you are a smoker, wait 2 hours after your last cigarette to monitor Kick Counts; nicotine and decreased oxygen will decrease fetal movements.

Your baby has sleep / wake cycles (or periods of rest and activity) occurring during each hour. You should be able to feel movement during the activity period. Once a day, rest on your left side with your hand on your abdomen. Count these movements and concentrate only on the baby at this time. It is reassuring to feel at least 10 or more movements per hour. If you do not feel 10 or more movements in one hour, drink some juice or milk or have something to eat, wait 15-30 minutes and repeat the test.

If you again fail to feel at least 10 movements, call the office immediately (during regular hours) or report to the hospital, (after-hours or on weekends or holidays). At the office or hospital, a fetal heart rate monitor can then be used to record the baby's heart rate and further assess the well-being of your baby.

It is best to keep a written record of these movement counts on the back of this sheet so your baby's trend of movements can be appreciated. Please bring this record with you to prenatal visits in the office or trips to the hospital.

Please try to be conscientious in utilizing this technique since monitoring is the best way to follow fetal movement. This will help your doctor in assessing your baby's well-being prior to birth.