



Stillbirth Prevention Fact Sheet

Count the Kicks is proven to save lives. Published in AJOG and BJOG, evidence shows that expectant parents who utilize *Count the Kicks* have better birth outcomes. Please use this up-to-date information on the impact of stillbirth in the U.S., the importance of fetal movement monitoring, and our proven stillbirth prevention program.

What is *Count the Kicks*?

Count the Kicks is an evidence-based stillbirth prevention program that teaches expectant parents the method for and importance of monitoring their baby's movements daily during the third trimester of pregnancy, with the goal of lowering the country's stillbirth rate and saving babies across the nation. *Count the Kicks* helps expectant parents get to know their baby's normal movement patterns, and empowers them to contact their healthcare provider right away if there is a change in what's normal for their baby. [\[Source\]](#)

Is *Count the Kicks* proven?

Evidence shows that expectant parents who utilize *Count the Kicks* have better birth outcomes. *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* published research that shows a more than 30% reduction in Iowa's stillbirth rate in the first 10 years of the *Count the Kicks* stillbirth prevention program at a time when America's stillbirth rate remained stagnant. The results have led researchers to call for urgent action to address the stillbirth crisis in the U.S. and to study *Count the Kicks* on a national level. [\[Source\]](#)

Why is it important to track a baby's movements in the third trimester?

The CDC lists a change in a baby's movements as one of its 15 urgent maternal warning signs. Research shows a change in baby's movement can sometimes be the earliest or only indication that a baby may be in distress and needs to be checked by a healthcare provider. By counting their baby's kicks (and jabs and rolls!), expectant parents can get to know what is normal for their baby, which makes them more alert to potential red flags. [\[Source\]](#)

When should expectant parents begin to track fetal movement using *Count the Kicks*?

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends expectant parents begin monitoring movement daily in the third trimester, which begins at the 28th week. Expectant parents who are high risk or pregnant with multiples should start monitoring at 26 weeks. [\[Source\]](#)

How do you *Count the Kicks*?

Starting in the third trimester (28 weeks, or 26 weeks if you are high risk or pregnant with multiples), begin monitoring:

1. Monitor your baby's movements with the FREE *Count the Kicks* app (available in 20+ languages), web-based counter, or download a *Count the Kicks* paper chart.
2. Count your baby's movements (kicks, pokes, jabs, rolls and swishes) every day - preferably at the same time.
3. Time how long it takes your baby to get to 10 movements.
4. After your baby reaches 10 movements, rate the strength of your baby's movements, with 1 being fluttery and 5 being fierce.
5. After a few days, you will begin to see the average length of time it takes your baby to get to 10 movements.
6. Call your provider right away if you notice a change in strength of your baby's movements or how long it takes your baby to get to 10 movements. [\[Source\]](#)

What is considered normal?

Every baby is different. By keeping track of daily movement monitoring sessions, expectant parents can get to know what is normal for their baby. If there is a significant change in the strength of a baby's movements or how long it takes a baby to get to 10 movements, the parent should call their healthcare provider right away or go directly to the hospital for evaluation. [\[Source\]](#)

Who is responsible for creating the the *Count the Kicks* program?

Count the Kicks is a project of *Healthy Birth Day, Inc.*, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the prevention of stillbirth. *Healthy Birth Day, Inc.* was founded by five Iowa moms who all lost daughters to stillbirth or infant death in the early 2000s. After being connected through friends and pastors, a strong bond quickly formed between the women, and they decided to channel their grief into stillbirth prevention efforts to keep other families from experiencing the pain of losing a baby. [\[Source\]](#)

Is the *Count the Kicks* program based on research?

Count the Kicks is based on public health research in Norway that demonstrated a 30% reduction in stillbirth by teaching pregnant women how to monitor fetal movement during the third trimester of pregnancy by doing daily movement monitoring sessions. [\[Source\]](#)



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The FREE *Count the Kicks* app is available in 20+ languages in the iOS and Google Play app stores. For more information please visit CountTheKicks.org.



Stillbirth Prevention Fact Sheet

What is stillbirth?

Stillbirth is defined as the loss of a baby during pregnancy at 20 weeks or greater gestation. [\[Source\]](#)

What resources are available for maternal healthcare professionals?

Count the Kicks educational materials are available in several languages at CountTheKicks.org. Thanks to the generous support of our partners, these educational materials are available for FREE to order in more than 30 states.

Is stillbirth really still a concern in the U.S.?

- Sadly, yes. Across the U.S., approximately 21,209 babies are lost to stillbirth every year. [\[Source\]](#)
- 1 out of every 177 pregnancies in the U.S. ends in stillbirth. [\[Source\]](#)
- More than 15% of maternal deaths within 42 days of delivery occur in women who experienced a stillbirth. [\[Source\]](#)
- Research shows that the risk of severe maternal morbidity is more than four times higher among stillbirth deliveries compared with live births. [\[Source\]](#)

Who is most at risk of losing a baby to stillbirth? [\[Source\]](#)

- A disproportionate number of babies are born still to Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Black, and American Indian or Alaska Native families.
- According to the CDC, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander pregnancies have a 1 in 97 chance of ending in stillbirth.
- According to the CDC, Black pregnancies have a 1 in 100 chance of ending in stillbirth.
- According to the CDC, American Indian or Alaska Native pregnancies have a 1 in 139 chance of ending in stillbirth.
- According to the CDC, Hispanic pregnancies have a 1 in 216 chance of ending in stillbirth.
- According to the CDC, White pregnancies have a 1 in 223 chance of ending in stillbirth.
- According to the CDC, Asian pregnancies have a 1 in 270 chance of ending in stillbirth.

What are the biggest risk factors for stillbirth?

- racism
- maternal age
- smoking
- previous pregnancy loss
- pregnancy complications (diabetes, etc.) [\[Source\]](#)

What does the latest research say about stillbirth prevention?

- The latest research indicates that expectant parents should pay attention to the strength of their baby's movements, and notify their healthcare provider right away if they notice a change in the strength of their baby's movements. [\[Source\]](#)
- Expectant parents should always sleep on their side, as research shows this is the best position for mom and baby. [\[Source\]](#)
- Research shows 1 in 4 stillbirths can be preventable. [\[Source\]](#)

Is *Count the Kicks* recommended by any maternal healthcare organizations?

- *Count the Kicks* has been designated a Best Practice by the Association of Maternal Child Health Programs (AMCHP). [\[Source\]](#)
- *Count the Kicks* is endorsed by the International Childbirth Educators Association (ICEA).

What are the other benefits of *Count the Kicks*?

- Monitoring baby's movements helps expectant parents to bond with their baby. Taking time to *Count the Kicks* provides parents with a special time each day to focus on their baby's movements and personality.
- Movement monitoring is an opportunity to invite a partner or older children to share in this experience and bond with the baby.
- 77% of App Users report that using the *Count the Kicks* app helped to reduce their anxiety about the well-being of their baby. [\[Source\]](#)
- 84% of App Users report that using the *Count the Kicks* app helped to increase their feelings of bonding and connection with their baby. [\[Source\]](#)

What is the impact of the the *Count the Kicks* campaign?

- In Iowa, where the campaign started, the stillbirth rate has dropped nearly 32% in 10 years (2008-2018). [\[Source\]](#)
- Stillbirth rates for Black families in Iowa have dropped a promising 39% in the first five years of *Count the Kicks*. In addition, when comparing 2008 to 2021, Iowa has seen a nearly 44% reduction in the African American stillbirth rate. [\[Source\]](#)
- Our website has more than 145 baby saves stories from families in 37 states and 6 countries (U.S., Canada, Brazil, U.K., Philippines, and New Zealand) who have written in to share how the *Count the Kicks* program helped their baby to have a healthy birth outcome. [\[Source\]](#)
- We have a vision to replicate this success in all 50 states. If we can reduce the national stillbirth rate by 32% as we have seen in Iowa, more than 7,500 babies will be saved every year. [\[Source\]](#)



Stillbirth Prevention Fact Sheet

What factors contribute to racial disparities in birth outcomes?

Research from the American College of Gynecology (ACOG) shows there are several contributing factors to the racial health disparities in stillbirth. [\[Source\]](#). Researchers point to the following as causes for the disparities:

- Systemic racism, or the way that society fosters racial discrimination through mutually reinforcing systems of housing, education, employment, earnings, media perception, health care, and criminal justice. These patterns and practices reinforce discriminatory beliefs, values, and distribution of resources that can negatively impact health outcomes. [\[Source\]](#)
- Epigenetics explains how early experiences, both positive and negative, can have lifelong impacts. This type of scientific research shows how environmental influences can affect the expression of genes. Life experiences can rearrange the epigenetic marks that govern gene expression; they can change whether and how genes release the information. [\[Source\]](#)
- Expectant parents of color are more predisposed to conditions like gestational diabetes and preeclampsia.
- Access to healthcare can impact early concerns or diagnosis of conditions and treatment.
- Socioeconomic barriers.
- Education is NOT a determining factor. A college educated Black woman is still more likely to lose her baby than a high school educated white woman. [\[Source\]](#)

What is your organization doing to address racial disparities in birth outcomes?

Healthy Birth Day, Inc. is working to address health equity both internally and externally. Internally we have a health equity team on staff, and have biannual DEI trainings for our staff and board. Externally, we are working alongside non-clinical supporters to build relationships with trusted sources in marginalized communities. These include faith leaders, salons, libraries, community centers and doulas/birth workers.

NOT TRUE: Common Misconceptions About Baby's Movement in Pregnancy

My baby is always active. Why should I take time to *Count the Kicks*?

Even active babies can experience distress, sometimes quickly and without other warning signs. Monitoring your baby's movement every day takes the guesswork out of knowing if a normally active baby has slowed down. *Count the Kicks* gives you real data to show your healthcare provider if you have a concern. [\[Source\]](#)

Is movement monitoring recommended if I have a low-risk pregnancy?

ALL expectant parents should be educated on *Count the Kicks* and get to know what's normal for their baby, even if you are not high-risk. [\[Source\]](#)

What is considered normal? Should I expect to get a certain number of movements in 1 or 2 hours?

Every baby and every pregnancy are different. Research has moved away from the idea that expectant parents should expect a certain number of movements in a specific period of time. Instead, current research indicates expectant parents should work to understand the normal amount of time each day it takes their baby to get to 10 movements each day. [\[Source\]](#)

Why do I need to *Count the Kicks* when I can hear his or her heartbeat with a Doppler device?

A change of the baby's heartbeat is one of the last things that occurs when a baby is in distress. A change in a baby's movement may indicate potential problems before actual changes in the heart rate are detected. Expectant parents should only use a Doppler device under the guidance of a healthcare provider. [\[Source\]](#)

Should I drink something cold or eat something sugary to get my baby moving?

NO! Research has moved away from the idea that sugary drinks and the like are a good way to get baby to move. A baby's movement is best monitored without interventions like juice, candy, etc. If a baby isn't moving like normal, expectant parents should get checked right away. [\[Source\]](#)

Do babies kick less or run out of room near the end of pregnancy?

NO! Babies don't run out of room at the end of pregnancy. The types of movements may change (more jabs, fewer rolls), but babies should move up to and even during labor. If an expectant parent is monitoring their baby's movements at the same time each day, it should take about the same amount of time to feel 10 movements. [\[Source\]](#)

Can I *Count the Kicks* if I have an anterior placenta?

Yes! Research shows that fetal movement counting times are similar to other placental locations from 24 weeks gestation and on. We recommend sitting or lying down in a comfortable position and taking time to really focus on your baby's movement while using the FREE *Count the Kicks* app. For additional advice on monitoring movement with an anterior placenta, talk with your provider. [\[Source\]](#)

Help Save Babies With Us!

Count the Kicks is the leading resource for tracking fetal movement in the third trimester of pregnancy. We are working to reduce the country's stillbirth rate and save babies across the nation. If you are interested in using our evidence-based information and images to raise awareness about *Count the Kicks* and stillbirth prevention in the U.S., please contact us to request a licensing agreement to use our educational resources. To get started, contact Emily Price, CEO of *Healthy Birth Day, Inc.* at Price.Emily@HealthyBirthDay.org.