

Down Syndrome



Indiana™

Frequently Asked Questions

Was there something that could have been done during pregnancy that would have prevented Down syndrome?

No! Down syndrome is not caused by anything that either parent did before or during pregnancy.

What causes Down syndrome?

Down syndrome, also known as Trisomy 21, indicates an extra 21st chromosome. The error in cell division of chromosomes, called nondisjunction, occurs immediately at conception. Most people have 23 pairs of chromosomes. In a person with Down syndrome, the extra chromosome is found in all cells.

Are there different levels of Down syndrome, or ways of knowing how mild or severe it is?

Down syndrome is not an illness; having Down syndrome does not make a person sick. Either a person has Down syndrome or he or she does not.

Can a person grow out of having Down syndrome?

No, because chromosomes make up the life matter of each person, that cell structure cannot be altered.

Is there medication or drug therapy available that can reverse Down syndrome?

No. There may be other medical conditions present for a person with Down syndrome, as with any one, that may require medications.

Are there different types of Down syndrome?

Yes, because of chromosome formation, there are three (3) types:

1. *Nondisjunction Trisomy 21* - the most common type (95%); instead of two 21st chromosomes, a baby is born with three;
2. *Mosaicism* - the least common type (1-2%); chromosomes divide unevenly, but not until the second or third cell division after conception, so only some cells have the extra chromosome
3. *Translocation* - a part of the 21st chromosome has broken off and attached itself to another chromosome, providing extra genetic material in all of a person's cells.

This information provided courtesy of Down Syndrome Indiana.

For More information, please contact Down Syndrome Indiana at www.dsindiana.org
or call 317-925-7617.