Fetal Movement Counts

Fetal movement counting (also called “kick counts”) is a test that you can do at home to check on the well-being of your baby. It is only accurate in the last trimester of pregnancy. Prior to 28 weeks, the size and positioning of the baby is so variable that your ability to feel movement may be altered. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that you time how long it takes you to feel 10 kicks, flutters, swishes, or rolls. Ideally, you want to feel at least 10 movements within 1 hour. You will likely feel 10 movements in much less time when you are concentrating on feeling the movement.

How to do kick counts:

First, eat something sweet and/or drink something very cold. Then, lay on your left side in a quiet room with your hands on your belly. Count how long it takes the baby to make 10 movements. If it takes 1 hour or less, the result is “reassuring” (which means that for now, it does not appear that there are any problems). However reassuring, it is important to know that this is not a guarantee of a good outcome.

If you do not feel 10 movements in 1 hour, do not be alarmed. Call the office and ask to speak to a triage nurse. We will give you further instructions and order more testing if necessary.

Our office phone number is (410) 573-9530. If you are calling when the office is closed, please follow the prompts to reach the doctor on-call.