

After 28 weeks of pregnancy, if there is no fetal movement over a 24-hour period, notify the health care provider immediately.

Goal

Help your client:

- Be aware of the baby's movements each day
- Understand how to do kick counts
- Understand when to call the clinic or hospital

Background

If a woman is pregnant for the first time, she will usually feel the baby moving (quickening) between 18 and 22 weeks. Women who have been pregnant before may notice movement earlier. This fetal movement helps show the wellbeing of the fetus.

By 22 weeks of pregnancy, the fetus should be felt moving often.

After 28 weeks of pregnancy, no fetal movement over a 24-hour period is a sign of possible trouble. She should be checked by a health care provider.

Steps to Take

For all clients:

- Discuss the importance of fetal movement
- There are several methods for doing kick counts. Discuss the method used in your practice.
- Discuss the *Count Your Baby's Kicks* handout with the client. Show her the method for doing kick counts.
 - ◆ The method discussed in the handout is "Count to 10". In the handout, the woman is advised to feel for kick counts. After eating, she should sit or lie down on her left side. She should count up to 10 movements. For normal pregnancies, this usually occurs within 1 hour and at most will take place within 2 hours.
- Practice kick counts with the client
- Tell her she can start counting kicks at her 7th month or at 28 weeks
- Review when and how to call during business hours, and during evenings and weekends

Follow Up

At each prenatal visit, ask the client whether she is doing kick counts each day. Remind her to talk to her provider if the pattern of movement changes.

