

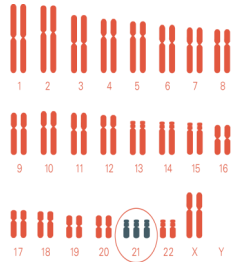
CHANGING YOUR THINKING

EASY READ DOCUMENT

WHAT IS DOWN SYNDROME?



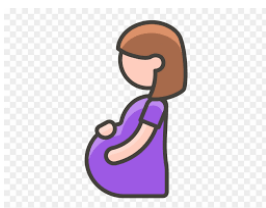
Down Syndrome is a genetic condition which you are born with and stays with you throughout your life. Down Syndrome is not an illness. Down Syndrome is sometimes called Down's Syndrome.



People with Down Syndrome have an extra chromosome in their cells that other people don't have.



About 1 in 1000 babies are born with Down Syndrome. There are about 40,000 people living with Down Syndrome in the United Kingdom.



A baby born with Down Syndrome happens by chance. Most babies with Down Syndrome are born to mothers under 35 years old. But the chance of having a baby with Down Syndrome increases with the age of the mother.



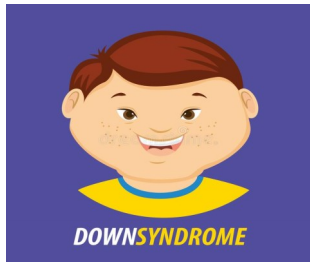
A woman can be tested for a Down Syndrome baby when she is about 3 months pregnant. It is the pregnant woman's choice if she has the test or not.



A person with Down Syndrome will have a learning disability.

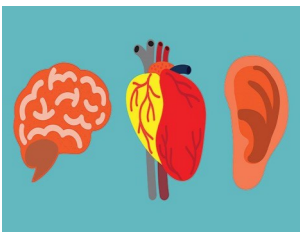
MILD
MODERATE
SEVERE

Their learning disability could be mild or moderate or severe.

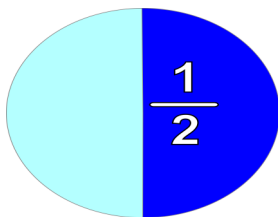


People with Down Syndrome share some common features. These include: round faces, upturned eyes, short neck, short in height and poor muscle tone.

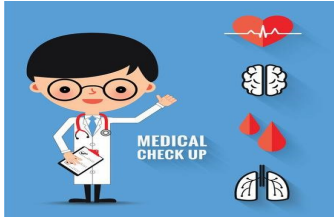
A person with Down Syndrome might have some physical conditions.



These include problems with the heart, digestion, the eyes and ears and the thyroid gland. This doesn't mean someone with Down Syndrome will have all of these problems.



About 1 in 2 people with Down Syndrome will have heart problems.



This is why it is important for children and adults with Down Syndrome to have regular appointments with their GP and go to their annual health checks.

Their GP can refer them to specialists to help their physical problems and their learning disabilities.

These specialists might include:



- ♦ Physiotherapists
- ♦ Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)
- ♦ Opticians
- ♦ Hearing Specialists
- ♦ Occupational Therapists (OTs)



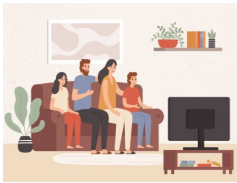
Each child with Down Syndrome is different. And each child should have the right support for them.

Some children will go to mainstream schools while other children will go to special needs schools and colleges.

Where an adult with Down Syndrome lives and spends their time depends on how severe their learning disability and physical problems are.



- ♦ Some adults live on their own



- ♦ Some adults live with family or friends



- ♦ Some adults live in supported houses



Some adults get paid jobs, or voluntary jobs or go to day services. Some adults do all of these.



Most adults with Down Syndrome live healthy and happy lives.



But they will need support with some parts of daily life. These might include help with: shopping, cooking, paying bills and going to appointments.



It is important that people with Down Syndrome get their voices heard. They don't want to be talked down to. They want to be listened to.



They want to be recognised as the important members of the community that they are.



There are organisations with help and advice.

These include the **NHS**
www.nhs.uk

Also **The Down's Syndrome Association** for people with Down Syndrome, their family and carers

www.downs-syndrome.org.uk
Helpline 0333 1212 300

Also **Mencap** for people with learning disabilities

www.mencap.org.uk
Helpline 0808 808 111



[Ian is from Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan. Ian has Down Syndrome. To see a short film about Ian and his life click on the link below.](#)

[About my Down syndrome - Ian - YouTube](#)