

FACTS About Down syndrome

- Down syndrome is a common genetic variation that usually causes delays in physical, intellectual and language development.
- The exact causes of the chromosomal rearrangement and primary prevention of Down syndrome are currently unknown.
- Down syndrome is one of the leading clinical causes of cognitive delay in the world - it is not related to race, nationality, religion or socio-economic status.
- The incidence of Down syndrome in the United States is estimated to be 1 in every 800 - 1,000 live births.
- Of all children born in this country annually, approximately 5,000 will have Down syndrome.
- There are approximately 1/4 million families in the United States affected by Down syndrome.
- While the likelihood of giving birth to a child with Down syndrome increases with maternal age; nevertheless, 80% of babies with Down syndrome are born to women under 35 years of age, as women in that age group give birth to more babies overall.
- There is wide variation in mental abilities, behavior and physical development in individuals with Down syndrome. Each individual has his/her own unique personality, capabilities and talents.
- 30% - 50% of the individuals with Down syndrome have heart defects and 8% - 12% have gastrointestinal tract abnormalities present at birth. Most of these defects are now correctable by surgery.
- Individuals with Down syndrome benefit from loving homes, early intervention, inclusive education, appropriate medical care and positive public attitudes.
- In adulthood, many persons with Down syndrome hold jobs, live independently and enjoy recreational opportunities in their communities.