

Down Syndrome

What is it?

Down Syndrome is the most common pattern of malformation found in newborns. It is caused by a person having three copies of chromosome 21 instead of two copies. It is important to know that this person's chromosomes are normal, they just have one more chromosome than you and me.

There are three different types of Down Syndrome

- 1) Standard Trisomy 21 – Most common type, when chromosome comes from the egg or the sperm
- 2) Translocation – When a piece of chromosome 21 is found on different chromosome
- 3) Mosaicism – When a person has a blend of cells (some with 46 chromosomes, some with 47 chromosomes)

What are the symptoms?

Some symptoms include birth defects, some degree of mental retardation, characteristic facial features and visual and hearing impairment. Coordination is often lacking, and the voice can be boisterous. These children will learn to do the things other babies will do, but it will take them longer to reach development milestones. Problems that often occur are chronic rhinitis, conjunctivitis and periodontal disease.

How is it treated?

Once you learn of your child's condition, beginning therapy is important. Early intervention, beginning in infancy, can help these children achieve their potential. Therapist at the Pediatric Therapy Center will work together to coordinate your child's care. Physical therapists will work with your child to improve his or her gross motor skills (muscle tone, reflexes and stability). The occupational therapist will work with your child on understanding the information around them through vision, touch, hearing and movement. A speech therapist will focus on issues of feeding, words and sounds.