

## DOWN SYNDROME

### Information

#### What Causes Down Syndrome?

Down syndrome is a genetic chromosome 21 disorder causing development and intellectual delays. Usually, when one cell divides in two, all pairs of chromosomes are split so that one of the pair goes to one cell, and the other goes to the other cell. But in rare cases, both chromosomes from a pair go together into one cell.

#### HOW DOES IT AFFECT KIDS?

Kids with Down Syndrome tend to share certain physical features such as: flat facial profile, an upward slant to the eyes, small ears, and a protruding tongue. Low muscle tone is also a characteristic for children with DS.

#### WHAT IS DOWN SYNDROME?

DS is the term for a set of cognitive and physical symptoms that can result from having an extra copy or part of a copy of chromosome 21.

#### INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL SYMPTOMS

Cognitive impairment, which means problems with thinking and learning, is common in people with Down Syndrome and usually ranges from mild to moderate. Down syndrome is only rarely associated with severe cognitive impairment.

Common cognitive and behavioral problems may include:

- Short attention span
- Poor judgement
- Impulsive behavior
- Slow learning
- Delayed language and speech development

In addition, people with Down syndrome are at increased risk for a range of other health conditions, including Autism Spectrum Disorders, problems with hormones and glands, hearing loss, vision problems, and heart abnormalities.