

MEDICARE
T.P.A Services (I) Pvt. Ltd.

HEALTH AWARENESS DEPOT
FOR
THE MONTH OF OCTOBER
Promoting acceptance and inclusion of all individuals with Down syndrome.

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October is
Down syndrome
Awareness Month
promoting acceptance and inclusion of all individuals with Down syndrome

October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month.

October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month, a chance to spread awareness. People with Down syndrome and their loved ones can spread awareness about Down syndrome.

Down syndrome

Down syndrome is a genetic condition in which a person has 47 chromosomes instead of the usual 46. This genetic disorder, which varies in severity, causes lifelong intellectual disability and developmental delays, and in some people it causes health problems.

Causes:

In most cases, Down syndrome occurs when there is an extra copy of chromosome 21. This form of Down syndrome is called Trisomy 21. The extra chromosome causes problems with the way the body and brain develop. Down syndrome is one of the most common causes of human birth defects.

Is it inherited?

Most of the time, Down syndrome isn't inherited. It's caused by a mistake in cell division during the development of the egg, sperm or embryo.

The chance of passing on the translocation depends on the sex of the parent who carries the rearranged chromosome 21:

- ✚ If the father is the carrier, the risk is about 3 percent.
- ✚ If the mother is the carrier, the risk is between 10 and 15 percent.

Symptoms:

Common physical signs include:

- ✚ Decreased muscle tone at birth.
- ✚ Excess skin at the nape of the neck.
- ✚ Flattened nose.
- ✚ Separated joints between the bones of the skull (sutures).
- ✚ Single crease in the palm of the hand.
- ✚ Small ears.
- ✚ Small mouth.
- ✚ Upward slanting eyes.
- ✚ Wide, short hands with short fingers.
- ✚ White spots on the colored part of the eye (Brushfield spots).

Children may also have delayed mental and social development. Common problems may include:

-  Impulsive behavior.
-  Poor judgment.
-  Short attention span.
-  Slow learning.

Many different medical conditions are seen in people with Down syndrome, including:

-  Birth defects involving the heart.
-  Dementia.
-  Eye problems, such as cataracts (most children with Down syndrome need glasses).
-  Early and massive vomiting, which may be a sign of a gastrointestinal blockage.
-  Hearing problems, probably caused by regular ear infections.
-  Hip problems and risk of dislocation.
-  Long-term (chronic) constipation problems.
-  Sleep apnea (because the mouth, throat, and airway are narrowed in children with Down syndrome).
-  Teeth that appear later than normal and in a location that may cause problems with chewing.
-  Underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism).

Coping and support:

Consider these steps to prepare yourself and to care for your child:

-  Find a team of trusted professionals.
-  Seek out other families who are dealing with the same issues.
-  A loving secure environment is the most important thing that you can give your baby at this time.
-  All children with Down's syndrome will take longer to learn things than other children and will need extra help to do so. They come under the category of children who have '**special educational needs**'.
-  People with Down's syndrome will need different levels of support to achieve the things they want in daily life.

Prevention:

There's no way to prevent Down syndrome. If you're at high risk of having a child with Down syndrome or you already have one child with Down syndrome, you may want to consult a genetic counselor before becoming pregnant.

A genetic counselor can help you understand your chances of having a child with Down syndrome. He or she can also explain the prenatal tests that are available and help explain the pros and cons of testing.

Reference Links:

-  <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/down-syndrome/basics/prevention/con-20020948>
-  <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000997.htm>
-  <http://www.ndss.org/About-NDSS/Our-Team/Ambassadors/Goodwill-Ambassador/Straight-Talk-with-Chris-Burke/Down-Syndrome-Awareness-Month/>
-  <http://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/campaigns/awareness-week.html>

For any enquiry or assistance please contact: wellness@medicaretpa.co.in

Disclaimer: No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.