

Down Syndrome

Also called: Trisomy 21

Down syndrome is one of the most common genetic conditions, affecting approximately 1 in every 800-1,000 children. Down syndrome is a set of mental and physical symptoms that result from having an extra copy of chromosome 21. The additional genetic material alters the course of development and results in certain kinds of birth defects, as well as developmental delays in motor skills, language and other areas of learning. Most of the birth defects (including hearing loss, congenital heart disease, and vision disorders) can be corrected with surgery. Even though people with Down syndrome may have some physical and mental features in common, symptoms of Down syndrome can range from mild to severe. Usually, mental development and physical development are slower in people with Down syndrome than in those without it. Individuals with Down syndrome benefit greatly from early developmental intervention, special education, and a specific plan of medical care.

Down syndrome cannot be cured. However, many people with Down syndrome live productive lives well into adulthood. Parents should keep in mind that children with Down syndrome have a wide range of abilities and talents, and each child develops at his or her own particular pace. It may take children with Down syndrome longer than other children to reach developmental milestones, but many of these milestones will eventually be met. Parents should make a concerted effort not to compare the developmental progress of a child with Down syndrome to the progress of other siblings or even to other children with Down syndrome.

NOTE: This web page was compiled from a variety of sources including the online resources of Medline Plus, the National Down Syndrome Congress, St. Louis Children's Hospital and other resources listed below, but is not intended to substitute or replace the professional medical advice you receive from your physician. The content provided here is for informational purposes only, and was not designed to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Consult your health care provider with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this specific condition.

RESOURCES

NOTE: This page contains links to other World Wide Web sites with information about this disorder. The Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) hopes you find these sites helpful, but remember the DHSS does not control nor does it necessarily endorse the information presented on these web sites.

For a complete list of resources related to birth defects, including state programs and resources, support groups and not-for-profit organizations click on the following link.

<https://health.mo.gov/living/families/genetics/birthdefects/resources.php>

- [Down Syndrome Guild of Greater Kansas City](#)
- [Genetic Alliance](#)
- [March of Dimes](#)
- [MedlinePlus](#)
- [National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities \(NCBDDD\)](#)
- [National Down Syndrome Congress](#)
- [National Down Syndrome Society](#)
- [Pujols Family Foundation](#)

- [St. Louis ARC](#)
- [The Arc of the United States](#)
- [St. Louis Children's Hospital](#)
- <http://www.stlouischildrens.org/our-services/down-syndrome-center>

Genetic Tertiary Centers

How to Obtain Genetic Services

Your family physician can usually provide information regarding genetic services in your area. Genetic clinics are periodically held in a location near you. For information, contact one of the centers listed below.

[Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center](#)

<http://www.cardinalglennon.com/MedicalSpecialties/Genetics/Pages/Genetics.aspx>

St. Louis, Missouri 314-577-5639

[Children's Hospital at University Hospital and Clinics](#)

Columbia, Missouri 573-882-6991

[Children's Mercy Hospital](#)

Kansas City, Missouri 816-234-3290

[St. Louis Children's Hospital](#)

St. Louis, Missouri 314-454-6093