



Down Syndrome

Down syndrome happens when a person has an extra copy of chromosome 21.

Every person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may or may not have “typical” Down syndrome symptoms.



If someone has Down syndrome, they have a higher chance of developing:

- Heart defects
- Hearing problems
- Breathing problems
- Childhood leukemia (a type of cancer)
- Thyroid problems
- Alzheimer’s disease

People diagnosed with Down syndrome have mild to moderate cognitive delays. This means that they will develop more slowly than the average person.

Many times, those with Down syndrome are shorter. They may also have*:

- Almond-shaped eyes that slant up
- Low muscle tone
- A shorter neck
- Small ears, hands, and feet
- A single line across the palm of their hand
- A tongue that sometimes sticks out of the mouth
- Tiny white spots on the colored part of the eye
- Small pinky fingers that sometimes curve toward the thumb

*This information is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website ([CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)).