

UMass Memorial Health Care Down Syndrome Clinic Specialists



Audiology-ENT

Individuals with Down syndrome have a number of problems with their hearing as well as their ears, noses and throats (ENT problems). They are at increased risk of having hearing loss as infants. They tend to have enlarged adenoids and tonsils and tend to have more ear infections. Screening for these problems is critical!



Cardiology

About half of the children born with Down syndrome will have a heart defect, where a portion of the heart did not develop normally. Many of these defects improve with time, and some require surgery. Cardiologists monitor and treat these heart conditions.



Dermatology

Many children with Down syndrome have problems with their skin, ranging from dry skin to severe eczema. Vitiligo and alopecia are much more common than in the general population. Some skin problems can signify a more serious underlying diagnosis that can be difficult to diagnose by dermatologists who are not familiar.



Endocrine

Infants and children with Down syndrome have an increased risk for thyroid disorders, treatment for which is provided by an endocrinologist. Other hormone problems are less common, but can include growth delay and diabetes. An endocrinologist can monitor for these conditions and provide the right treatment.



Gastroenterology

Newborns with Down syndrome are at higher risk of having anatomical problems with their GI tracts, including trachea-esophageal fistula, poor GI motility and imperforate anus. They may also have feeding difficulties and many have food allergies. There is also a higher incidence of Celiac disease. Early diagnosis is the best treatment.



Genetics

Down syndrome is caused by an extra copy of a chromosome, and all of the genes on it. Clinical geneticists are doctors who understand the cause of Down syndrome, and have experience in the many ways this can affect a child or adult. Their role is to help the primary care provider guide the child and family.



Hematology

Some infants with Down syndrome have unusually high numbers of red or white blood cells. Later on, children with Down syndrome can have anemia (too few red blood cells). If any of these are found by routine screening, a hematologist will provide proper treatment.



Nutrition

Eating habits, genetics, activity levels and other factors all contribute to a healthy lifestyle, and maintaining good nutrition and appropriate weight. Coordinating education about nutrition and appropriate levels of exercise help children and adults with Down syndrome maintain a healthy weight.



Orthopedics

Children with Down syndrome have gross motor developmental delays and hypotonia. They are at increased risk of having unstable hips or hip dysplasia. Adolescents can have hip problems or scoliosis. Adults have a higher incidence of joint problems than the general population. Proper treatment can optimize normal development.



Pulmonary

Breathing problems are among the most common reason for a child with Down Syndrome to be admitted to the hospital. Anatomical problems like big tonsils and large tongue make breathing difficult and contribute to sleep apnea. Abnormalities in the pulmonary vessels also contribute to breathing problems in infancy.

For appointments, call 774-443-UMDS (8637).

To find a physician, call 855-UMASS-MD.



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