



Welcome to our Resource page

The first thing you will want to do after getting a diagnosis is to talk to your pediatrician regarding your baby's health. You will likely have a lot of questions and the pediatrician is the first place to start. Your doctor will have a specific Down syndrome Care Plan that will have all the medical considerations to be investigated. The care plan is designed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If your doctor does not have this guide then you can print it out here and take it with you on your doctor visits. Each stage on the care plan identifies the issues that your doctor will address specific to your child's age. Be sure to write down any questions you have in advance and take the list with you. Also, take any medications with you to every doctor's appointment so that each doctor will know exactly what medications your child is on.

Hopefully your doctor's office will make a Regional Center referral for your child after the diagnosis. If not, you can find your local regional center on the list below. This is the first phone call to make after the pediatrician. Anyone can make a referral with the parent's permission if they suspect the child has a developmental disability. Here is a little info about Regional Centers with more noted below. California is the only state in the US that has the Regional Center system. There are 21 regional centers located throughout the state. They coordinate community-based services and support for individuals with developmental disabilities or at-risk of developmental disabilities and their families. They assist in the person to have access to the services and supports best suited to them throughout their lifetime. Qualifying disabilities include Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome, other. After the referral is made, they will send you a letter and ask for you to call them to set up an appointment for an assessment within 15 working days. After, the team will review and determine if your child meets the criteria for services. An Individual Person Centered Plan will then be developed and a case manager will be assigned to the family/client for needed services. Regional centers links and partners with community services and agencies and attempts to meet the individual client's needs through existing community resources.

The second thing to address after the diagnosis is getting emotional and social support. This is very important to your wellbeing and your readiness to take care of your child with special needs. Most parents don't know that they are having a child with Down syndrome, so you will have lots of questions. Know that there is a lot of support out there and many parents that have walked in your shoes that are ready and willing to help guide you.

If your baby has just received a Down syndrome diagnosis, you are probably experiencing a wide range of feelings and reactions. And you probably want to know everything about raising a child with Down syndrome. A great place to start is to be connected to a Family Resource Center. There you will find opportunities to connect with other parents and be paired with a parent mentor if you choose. For new parents of babies with Down syndrome, an opportunity to speak with other parents who have experienced what you are experiencing can be invaluable. Parent support groups and trained parent mentors are there to listen, share, answer questions, and provide valuable information.