

F) Down Syndrome

Down Syndrome is usually suspected after birth as a result of the baby's appearance. There are many physical characteristics which form the basis for suspecting an infant has Down syndrome. Many of these characteristics are found, to some extent, in the general population of individuals who do not have Down syndrome. Hence, if Down syndrome is suspected, careful evaluation is required to confirm the diagnosis. Some infants with Down syndrome have only a few of these traits, while others have many. Among the most common traits are:

- **Muscle hypotonia, low muscle tone.**
- **Flat facial profile, a somewhat depressed nasal bridge and a small nose.**
- **Oblique palpebral fissures, an upward slant to the eyes.**
- **Dysplastic ear, an abnormal shape of the ear.**
- **A single deep crease across the center of the palm.**
- **Hyperflexibility, an excessive ability to extend the joints.**
- **Dysplastic middle phalanx of the fifth finger, fifth finger has one flexion furrow instead of two.**
- **Epicanthal folds, small skin folds on the inner corner of the eyes.**
- **Excessive space between large and second toe.**
- **Enlargement of tongue in relationship to size of mouth.**