



## **What exactly is 'Down's syndrome'?**

Interesting facts about Down's Syndrome

Most people have 23 chromosomes in duplicate. They store that person's entire genetic information, eg. the colour of his eyes, his skin or his hair. People with Down's syndrome have three copies of chromosome 21 instead of the two copies that are normal. That is why it is also referred to as trisomy 21. Approximately 1 child in 800 is born with Down's syndrome. In Hamburg alone there are more than 2,250 people with Down's syndrome.

This genetic disorder was named after the English doctor Langdon-Down, who was the first to describe the characteristics of these people. As well as having a very strong sense of direction, people with Down's syndrome are known for being particularly friendly, for having a good sense of humour and for being frank. They are, however, no different to other people when it comes to having individual personalities and desires. The genetic mutations can lead to clinical problems such as congenital heart defects, weak muscle tone or impaired hearing. Both intellectual and physical development are delayed in general, although individual potential for development varies greatly. The improved educational support systems of recent years have led to many people with Down's syndrome learning to read and write and being able to lead largely independent lives in adulthood.

**KIDS Hamburg e.V. Kontakt- und Informationszentrum Down-Syndrom** aims to represent the interests of people with Down's syndrome. The association would like to encourage contact and bring together family members, therapists and other parties interested in subject matter concerning 'Down's syndrome'. A further goal would be educating the general public about trisomy 21, so as to overcome prejudice and encourage the development of an inclusive society.

Educational activities and recreational activities for different age groups, specialised seminars and comprehensive counselling, all this is part of the work of KIDS Hamburg e.V. The association currently has more than 400 members and sources its finances mainly from membership fees and donations.

### **All interested parties are very welcome!**

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