

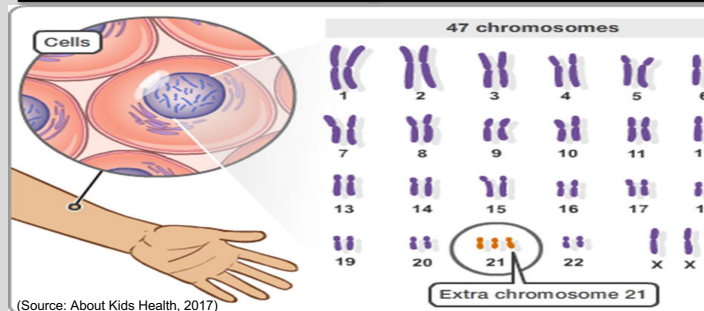
Introduction

Down Syndrome was named after a man called John Langdon Down, who was a British Physician who described the syndrome in 1866 (Ataman, Vatanoglu-Lutz, and Yildirim, 2012). During that era Down's Syndrome was known as mongolism and a child with this additional need were called mongoloids because of the child's physical appearance (Ataman, Vatanoglu-Lutz, and Yildirim, 2012). However, this is no longer tolerated as it is a degrading term and politically incorrect. Around forty-seven thousand people in the United Kingdom have Down Syndrome (House of Commons Library, 2023). Down Syndrome is an additional learning need where a baby is born with an extra copy of chromosome twenty-one, this is known as a type of down syndrome called 'trisomy' (NHS, 2023: Down syndrome act 2022). Down Syndrome is known to be caused during conception where cells failed to divide correctly which is known as 'nondisjunction' (National Association for Down Syndrome, 2018). Usually, people will have forty-six chromosomes altogether however an individual with Down Syndrome will have forty-seven. Down syndrome is the most common chromosomal disorder (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023). One in every seven-hundred and ninety-two live births result in a child having Down Syndrome (National Association for Down Syndrome, 2018).

Diagnosis

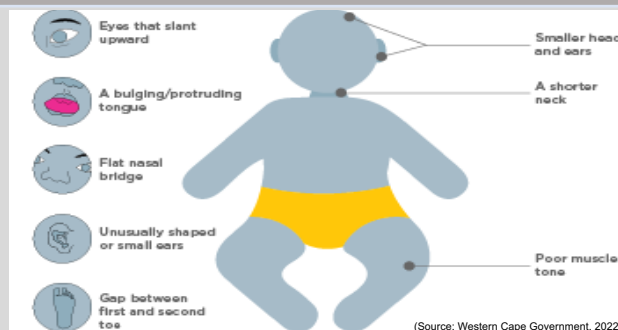
During ten to fourteen weeks of pregnancy, a pregnant woman will have a scan to check their baby is developing correctly. As well as this an ultrasound with blood tests can be carried out which can identify if the baby has Down Syndrome (NHS 2023). This is when a sonographer will look at the back of the baby's neck which is measured, the results of the measurements will indicate if the baby has Down Syndrome or not. This is called 'nuchal translucency' (NHS 2023). Tests are not one hundred percent accurate and may not be able to identify the condition which only depends on the baby being a certain position (Public Health Wales, 2020: NHS, 2023). This is an option for the mother and can reject this type of scan if they did not want it. After having this test, if the result came back as a higher chance of the baby having Down Syndrome the mother will be told within a week and if a lower chance, they will be contacted within two weeks (NHS, 2021). National Association for Down Syndrome, (2018) suggest eighty percent of children with Down Syndrome have mothers under the age of thirty-five, mothers over thirty-five can still deliver babies with Down Syndrome but have a greater risk. If mothers are unable to get a result in the combined test, the quadruple blood test will be offered during fourteen to twenty weeks (NHS Public Health Wales, 2022). It must be considered many mothers may not have the diagnoses until birth as some cannot make hospital appointments.

Down Syndrome



Barrier

UNICEF (No Date) states children with disabilities face stigma and discrimination called "ableism" due to people's attitudes. Both parent and children with Down Syndrome experience stigma and discrimination because of their additional learning need and will be affected (Down Syndrome Scotland, No date). These people are discriminated against and treated differently due to their disease. The stigma which has been created around Down Syndrome people can have a negative effect which would create a barrier for Down Syndrome people to live a neurotypical life. The social model of disability can be used to explain this type of barrier as this theory states their ability is limited by their environment, not by the additional learning need (Disability Rights UK, No Date). Stigma can make children with a disability feel alone, insecure and worthless. Stigma influences parents of children with Down Syndrome also. Many parents feel their child will stand out in society due to their facial features when having Down Syndrome parents have considered putting their child through cosmetic surgery to change their facial features in order to prevent stigma (Suzedells, 2006). As a result of surgery parents believe their child will be more socially accepted in society. Many parents are against this procedure because of the pain the child must go through. Many believe parents should be instead improving society acceptance for these children rather than changing the child in order to make them "fit" into society (Igbibia, and Jarrett, 2019).



Strategy

Children with Down Syndrome can be provided with different strategies in school to help support their learning needs. Visual support can be put into place in schools for children. Using visual aids such as visual timetables, visual cards, and visual sentence patterns can help children with Down syndrome understand and follow tasks more effectively (Shabiralyani *et al.* 2015). Down Syndrome Education International (2024) state children with Down Syndrome learn better when they can see things illustrated children with Down Syndrome develop slower than neurotypical children and may take longer to process information (Downs Syndrome Association, 2021) Many children can have a delay in language and struggle with their speech due to cognitive development, hearing problems and muscle tone, strength and coordination in their mouth and tongue (Lombardo, No Date). If children are struggling to communicate, they can use pictures to help convey what they would like to say (Frank, 2017). If practitioners use visual cards with pictures when speaking to a child with Down Syndrome, they will be able to visually see what the adult is saying as well as hearing which should make understanding easier (Down Syndrome Resource Foundation, 2018). Children find putting sentences together and using grammar difficult so therefore having cards to visually see images and order of sentence would help (Down Syndrome Resource Foundation, 2018).



Conclusion

To conclude Down Syndrome is a disability that many children are born with affecting their quality of life due to their impairments. All children with Down Syndrome are born with an extra chromosome, however, they are all unique and have different needs. With the correct support children with Down Syndrome can thrive and be successful. Currently young people and adults can get employment even with their disability which has vastly improved since many years ago. In fact, this year Mar Galcerán has become the first lady with Down Syndrome to become a member of parliament in Spain which shows society is changing and becoming inclusive (The Guardian, 2024). There are many barriers that may affect a child due to their condition but with the correct strategy and intervention based on the unique child, they can flourish.