

# March 21 is Down's Syndrome Awareness Day

Every year on March 21st, we celebrate the journey towards down syndrome acceptance and inclusion. Imagine a rainbow with an extra colour! The gold-and-blue rainbow is a symbol of hope and diversity. To learn more about Down's syndrome, check out the text and amazing link below!

Down syndrome is a genetic variation. In body cells, a rod-shaped material has the genetic codes which determine the development of our bodies and minds, even before birth. These rod-shaped pieces of genetic codes are called chromosomes. Down syndrome is the result of an extra copy of chromosome 21. As a genetic variation, down syndrome results in intellectual and developmental delays, distinctive physical features, and can often be associated with higher risk to various health issues throughout an individual's entire lifetime. This means that one of the key ways to support individuals with down syndrome is by helping them access health services, including but not limited to, visual/eye health, cardiovascular health, neurological health and reproductive and sexual health.

The Canadian Down Syndrome Association is a great place to find support resources. It is also a great hub to networking opportunities - because we are stronger together! Check them out at this link: <https://cdss.ca/>

## References:

[1] Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2017, January 31). What causes Down syndrome? Retrieved December 2023, from [nichd.nih.gov](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/):

[https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/down/conditioninfo/causes?utm\\_source=pocket\\_saves](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/down/conditioninfo/causes?utm_source=pocket_saves)

[2] Canadian Down Syndrome Society. (nd). About Down Syndrome. Retrieved December 2023, from [cdss.ca](https://cdss.ca/resources/general-information/): <https://cdss.ca/resources/general-information/>

[3] Cleveland Clinic. (2023, January 31). Living With. Retrieved December 2023, from My Cleveland Clinic: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17818-down-syndrome>

[4]the National Down Syndrome Society. (2023). A Promising Future: A Guide for New and Expecting Parents. na: [www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org). Retrieved December 2023, from [https://ndss.org/NDSS\\_Guide-For-New-and-Expectant-Parents.pdf](https://ndss.org/NDSS_Guide-For-New-and-Expectant-Parents.pdf)