



## What is the effect of an unbalanced chromosome pattern?

In a pregnancy with an unbalanced form of the translocation, a copy of one of the chromosomes involved will be missing or extra. Having three copies of a chromosome instead of the usual two is called **TRISOMY**. The effect of a trisomy depends on which chromosome is involved. If it is chromosome 14, 15 or 22 it is likely that the pregnancy would miscarry at an early stage. If it is 13 or 21, the pregnancy may miscarry or continue to term, resulting in the birth of a child with problems. Trisomy 21 is also known as Down syndrome. Trisomy 13 is called Patau syndrome. Having one copy of a chromosome instead of the usual two is called **MONOSOMY**. In this case there is not enough genetic material and the pregnancy would miscarry at an early stage.

## Can we tell which chromosome pattern will be passed on?

Unfortunately, it is impossible to predict how often a certain pattern will be passed on and we realise this can be difficult. It is quite possible for a person who carries a balanced Robertsonian translocation to have healthy children and many do. The chance of a pregnancy inheriting an unbalanced form of the translocation will depend on the chromosomes involved and whether the mother or the father is the translocation carrier. We will be able to discuss your particular situation with you in more detail in the genetics clinic.