

15,000 babies killed in late term abortions in 5 years

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An unborn baby at 20 weeks is growing fingernails and toenails, as well as head hair, eyelashes and eyebrows.

Abortion for disability is being further normalised

A [parliamentary question](#) has revealed just how many babies are killed in late-term abortions in the UK - and that the number is on the rise.

Sir John Hayes MP asked the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care how many abortions were performed after 20 weeks in each of the last five years.

The answer revealed that the number rose from 2,753 in 2013 to 3,564 in 2017 - an increase of 30%. The combined total of abortions at this late stage in the last five years is 14,996.

Normalising even late-term abortion

At 20 weeks gestation, an unborn baby has long since had a functioning brain and a beating heart. He or she will be about 20cm long from crown to rump and weigh nearly 500g. She is growing fingernails and toenails, as well as head hair, eyelashes and eyebrows. Her mother will notice her kicking and hiccupping.

A baby at this age will also react to painful stimuli.

Although most abortions happen in the first trimester (and, [as this video shows](#), babies at that stage are equally living, moving human beings), the increase in late-term abortions, when no one can claim the baby is just "a bunch of cells", shows how far abortion is being normalised.

Increase in disability abortions

This is particularly the case for abortions carried out under disability grounds (unlike most other grounds, the abortion law permits this after 24 weeks, right up to birth). In 2017, 3,314 abortions were due to the "risk that the child would be born seriously handicapped". In the case of Down's syndrome in particular, the numbers of abortions have [risen by 50% in ten years](#), despite there being more positive awareness of people living with the condition. There are [constant reports](#) of medical professionals pressuring parents into undergoing prenatal tests for disability, and then into aborting.

The obvious solution?

There also seems to be a prevailing attitude that abortion is the obvious next step when a baby is diagnosed with a life-limiting condition (generally cruelly and inaccurately referred to as a "fatal foetal abnormality"). This is despite [studies showing](#) that parents almost never regret carrying a baby who is going to die to term, and that they have significantly better outcomes than those who chose to abort. (Prof John Wyatt [spoke about this](#) at the 2017 SPUC National Conference).

This attitude has led to heartbreaking stories such as that of baby Mohamed, who died in his mother's arms after [being born alive](#) during a late-term abortion. It is unknown how often this happens in the UK, as the [Government does not collect statistics](#) on it, but the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists has pages of guidance on the care of babies born alive during late-term abortions.

Medicalising death

Despite the horror of killing a disabled baby at such a late stage of pregnancy, and the overwhelming evidence that it does not help the parents, there is a constant narrative to normalise late term abortion, particularly in the case of life-limiting conditions, when it is described as the logical next medical step to a diagnosis. For instance, [in this story published today](#), a couple say they aborted their baby girl, who has spina bifida, because it was the "best thing ethically" for her. The paper describes the termination as "giving birth".

Every life lost to abortion, at any age, is a tragedy. But an increase in late term abortions, especially as they often involve heartbroken parents of wanted babies being told by medical professionals that aborting their disabled or life-limited baby is the best thing, is a worrying sign of how death is being normalised as a medical solution.