Ohio Chapter
INCORPORATED IN OHIO
American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

Ohio Department of Health

# WHY DOES MY BABY NEED A NEWBORN SCREEN?

Some babies who look perfectly healthy at birth may have problems that will affect how they grow and develop. Newborn screening tests babies for many medical conditions that are not obvious at birth but need medical treatment. By finding the medical problem soon after birth, babies quickly receive the treatment they need. Newborn screening improves the health and development of babies.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

EVERY YEAR IN OHIO, **MORE THAN**

**500 NEWBORNS**

needing medical care are identified by newborn screening.

| WHAT TYPE OF SCREENING WILL BE DONE ON MY BABY? | HOW AND WHEN WILL MY BABY BE SCREENED? | HOW DO I FIND OUT MY BABY'S RESULTS? |
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| **Hearing screening for risk of hearing loss.** | Before leaving the hospital, your baby's hearing screen will be done. It is usually done in the mother's room or nursery. It only takes 15 minutes and your baby can sleep during the screening. | The results of your baby's hearing screen will be given to you in writing by hospital staff before you leave the hospital. Hospital staff will also help with scheduling a hearing evaluation if more testing is needed. |
| **Pulse oximetry screening for finding problems with the structure of the heart.** | Pulse oximetry screening is a simple, painless test that is usually done about 24 hours after your baby is born. A machine called a pulse oximeter measures the amount of oxygen in your baby's blood through sensors placed against your baby's skin. The sensors are placed on the right hand and either foot. | Your baby's healthcare provider will give you the results of the screening. If the test results are negative, your baby has normal levels of blood oxygen. If the test results are positive, your baby has low levels of oxygen in their blood. This does not always mean your baby has a heart disease. It means that your healthcare provider will continue to monitor your baby and may repeat the test a little later or do another type of testing called an echocardiogram. |
| **Blood spot screening for risk of several different medical conditions.** | A few drops of blood are collected from a prick in your baby's heel. This heel prick is usually done the day after the baby is born. The drops of blood are sent to the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory where testing is done for many different medical conditions. | The results of your baby's blood spot screening will be sent to the birth hospital and to your baby's health care provider. The results are usually available within two weeks. For most babies, the screen results are normal and parents will get the results at their baby's health check-up. If the newborn screen is not normal, then the healthcare provider will contact the family and arrange for additional testing. |

**For more information, please visit:**
https://tinyurl.com/29ta2dhr

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## WHAT IF MY BABY NEEDS FURTHER TESTING?

Your baby's healthcare provider will contact you if your baby needs further testing. He or she will tell you why your baby needs to be retested and the next steps needed. If your baby needs further testing, follow the healthcare provider's advice. Some testing will need to be done right away and other tests may need to be done when your baby is a little older. In some cases, your baby will be referred to a specialist.

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| **HEARING SCREENING**<br> | If your baby does not pass both inpatient hospital screenings, your baby will be referred to an audiologist for further testing within two to three weeks. If your baby has hearing loss, the Infant Hearing Program will refer your baby for home-based early intervention services to help with the development of communication and language. Identifying hearing loss as early as possible is important for your baby to grow and develop communication skills and to be ready for early learning and school years. |
| **PULSE OXIMETRY SCREENING**<br> | If your baby does not pass the pulse oximetry screening, further testing will be done to check for congenital heart disease. This testing may be done before your baby leaves the hospital or your baby will be referred to a pediatric cardiac specialist for further medical care. Critical congenital heart disease requires medical treatment within the baby's first few weeks or months of life to prevent death or disability. |
| **BLOOD SPOT SCREENING**<br> | If your baby's blood spot screening contains results that are not normal, your baby's healthcare provider will arrange for further testing right away. In some cases, your baby will be referred to a specialist. It is important to identify babies that have these conditions quickly, so they can start medical treatments that will improve their health and development as soon as possible. |

## DOES MY BABY HAVE TO BE SCREENED?

Newborn screening saves lives and improves the health of babies and it is required by Ohio law for all babies born in Ohio. In some circumstances, parents can refuse newborn screening. Parents may refuse any type of newborn screening if it conflicts with their religious beliefs. Parents may also refuse hearing screening for any other reason. Parents that refuse newborn screening must sign a form stating that they are objecting to this screening for their baby.

*Source: https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/newborn-screening/resources/brochure-english*

**For more information, please visit:**
https://tinyurl.com/29ta2dhr