

Iowa Newborn Screening Program- Quick Facts



- The Newborn Screen (NBS) is a simple blood test that should be performed on infants via heel-stick between 24-48 hours of life. Newborn screens detect life threatening and/or life altering conditions in babies that might otherwise seem healthy.
- Iowa screens for over 50 disorders; *time critical disorders include congenital adrenal hyperplasia, congenital hypothyroidism, galactosemia, and most metabolic disorders*
- Timeliness in newborn screening is crucial. Time critical disorders need immediate intervention to save a baby's life or to prevent permanent disability. If the recommendations say it's a medical emergency please take immediate action. The Iowa NBS dried blood spot program runs 365 days/year – this includes the NBS courier, the NBS lab and NBS follow up. If you are contacted on the weekend or holiday, it's because the baby could potentially have one of the time critical disorders and needs immediate intervention. NBS results are often available and acted upon as early as 24-48 hours from the collection date and time.
- Our goal is to have 95% of all screens to the NBS lab by 60 hours after birth. Please review your processes so that every baby eligible to be screened on any given day IS screened AND that their screen gets to the NBS lab the same day it's collected
- Please list the baby's first name whenever possible (not just Baby Girl XXX) and use the surname that the baby will be known by after discharge whenever possible.
- Please list the name of the physician who will be caring for the infant after discharge (first and last); please do not list the name of the hospitalist or the attending physician for the day.
- Please verify demographic (baby name, parent name, phone number, address) and PCP information with the parents. Inaccurate or missing information causes delays. When you fill out a newborn screening card, you hold a baby's life in your hands. Please make sure to fill it out completely.
- When collecting the newborn screen sample, try using 1 large drop of blood to fill the entire circle. Do not apply more than one drop of blood to a circle (don't layer the blood drops). Five filled circles are desired. The screen will not be rejected if 3 quality circles are obtained.
- Please collect a NBS prior to transfusing a baby or transferring a baby to another facility even if it's prior to 24 hours of age. Although the screen will need to be repeated, it will still be tested and acted upon. It's better to collect a screen prior to 24 hours of age than to not get a screen at all.
- The NBS program does not charge for repeat screens.
- Education about NBS should occur before the screen is obtained.
- Should a parent refuse a newborn screen, please have a parent sign the refusal form and submit it to the NBS lab within 6 days of birth. The NBS program would be happy to talk with parents if they are considering refusing the screen
- Contact the Iowa Newborn Screening Program if you have questions. We're here to help. Our phone number is 319-384-5097 and our email address is iowanewbornscreening@uiowa.edu.