Three simple screens

1. Blood screen
2. Hearing screen
3. Heart screen

All babies in the United States receive newborn screening. Each state decides which conditions to screen for.

A baby may look healthy but be born with a serious health condition.

Helps identify inherited, endocrine and metabolic conditions.

If found early, many can be treated.

Newborn screening: Blood screen

Blood screen process

Before a baby leaves the hospital, a health care provider pricks the baby’s heel to get a few drops of blood. The blood drops are placed and dried on a special paper.

This should happen within 48 hours of a baby’s birth.

Within 24 hours of the heel stick, the paper with blood drops should be sent to a newborn screening lab for testing.

Lab results

Shipping and testing

Within 5 days of birth, results for time-critical conditions should be shared with the baby’s provider.

Within 7 days of birth, results for all other conditions should be shared with the baby’s provider.

Follow-up

Negative screen:

- Provider is notified.
- Provider should follow up with baby’s family.
- If parents don’t hear about results, call and ask the provider.

Positive screen:

- Provider is notified.
- Provider follows up with baby’s family for further testing.
- Diagnostic tests must be done immediately to confirm results.
- Intervention should begin as soon as possible.

All newborn screening results should be reported to the baby’s provider within 7 days of birth.

Positive screen results require further testing and immediate follow-up.

A baby may look healthy but be born with a serious health condition.

Helps identify inherited, endocrine and metabolic conditions.

If found early, many can be treated.

Lab results

Shipping and testing

Follow-up

Negative screen:

- Provider is notified.
- Provider should follow up with baby’s family.
- If parents don’t hear about results, call and ask the provider.

Positive screen:

- Provider is notified.
- Provider follows up with baby’s family for further testing.
- Diagnostic tests must be done immediately to confirm results.
- Intervention should begin as soon as possible.

All newborn screening results should be reported to the baby’s provider within 7 days of birth.

Positive screen results require further testing and immediate follow-up.

March of Dimes materials are for information purposes only and are not to be used as medical advice. Always seek medical advice from your health care provider. March of Dimes materials reflect current scientific recommendations at time of publication. Check marchofdimes.org for updated information.