MARITIME
Newborn Screening
Dépistage néonatal
DES MARITIMES

IWK Health

SCREENING PROCESSES

A healthcare provider will give you the 'Information Sheet for Parent or Guardian' (found attached to the newborn screening blotter collection card) when your baby has the blood sample taken.

Make sure your contact information is correct and up to date so that you can be reached immediately if your baby needs more testing. If your contact information changes, please call Maritime Newborn Screening.

Results will be sent to your health care provider or to the birth hospital.

You can call Maritime Newborn Screening with questions about processes or results.

WHAT IS NEWBORN SCREENING?

These are routine tests recommended for all babies. Maritime Newborn Screening tests a dried blood spot sample for over 25 rare but treatable conditions. Newborn screening does not test for all serious medical problems.

SCREENING SAVES LIVES

A baby can appear healthy at birth but have a serious condition and need treatment. There may be no family history of the condition. Without screening, the condition may go undetected and cause severe health problems or death.

Finding these conditions through newborn screening means treatment can start right away to help babies stay as healthy as possible.

HOW IS THE NEWBORN SCREEN DONE?

A few drops of blood from a baby's heel are put onto a special piece of absorbent paper called a blotter. The sample is taken between 24-48 hours of life and tested by the IWK laboratory. Results are typically available by day 7 of life.

Newborn screening tests for different kinds of conditions:

- Inherited metabolic conditions
- Endocrine conditions
- Hemoglobin conditions (e.g., Sickle cell disease)
- Severe combined immunodeficiency
- Cystic fibrosis
- Spinal muscular atrophy

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SAMPLE?

The sample is sent from the birth hospital to the IWK laboratory and stored in a secure facility during and after testing. We are committed to keeping the sample and information safe and confidential. Samples are kept for 10 years and can be used to provide healthcare to your baby and may be used anonymously as part of routine quality assurance and analysis. If samples or information are used for research, approval by a research ethics board is needed. You can say no to the storage and use of blotters by contacting Maritime Newborn Screening.

SCREENING RESULTS

Screen Negative

Most babies screen negative (normal). This means there is a decreased chance a baby has one of these rare conditions. No follow-up is needed.

Screen Follow-up

About 10% of babies need additional samples to complete the newborn screen. Reasons for a repeat include sample quality (e.g., not enough sample, taken too early); prematurity, low birth weight, same sex multiples; or if clarification is needed for a specific condition (this does not mean the baby has this condition). Your healthcare provider or birth hospital will contact you if a repeat is needed. You can call Maritime Newborn Screening for more information.

Screen Positive

This result does **not** mean a baby has this condition. Further testing is needed for a diagnosis or to rule out the condition. A healthcare provider from Maritime Newborn Screening will contact you to explain the result and discuss next steps.

We also report when a baby is a carrier of a hemoglobin trait (like sickle cell trait, or "AS"). This result does not impact health or need treatment.

CONTACT US

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.maritimenewbornscreening.ca

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