UNSATISFACTORY SPECIMENT: There is not enough blood to complete all the required screening tests, or the sample does not work for other reasons.

“TOO EARLY” SPECIMENT: If the blood specimen was collected before your baby was 24 hours old, a second sample should be taken as soon as possible to avoid missing a disorder.

ABNORMAL TEST RESULT: An abnormal test result means that a disorder may be present. If the repeat test indicates that further evaluation is needed, your baby's doctor will be called right away. Note: Premature or low birth weight newborns are more likely to have abnormal test results on the first specimen even if a disorder is not present.

For more information, call:

Alabama Newborn Screening Division
Bureau of Family Health Services
RSA Tower, 201 Monroe Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104
1-866-928-6755

Director, NBS Division
334-206-5556

NBS Follow-Up Branch Manager
334-206-2971

NBS Follow-Up Coordinators
334-206-2944 or 334-206-5955
or 334-206-5729
Fax: 334-206-3063

NBS Lab Branch Manager
334-260-3475

NBS Lab
334-260-3476 Fax: 334-260-3439

http://www.adph.org/newbornscreening

Where can I get more information?

Alabama Department of Public Health
www.adph.org

March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.org

Save Babies Through Screening Foundation, Inc.
www.savebabies.org

for your baby’s health
What is newborn screening?

You will be glad to know that all newborns in Alabama are required by law to have a blood test shortly after birth to screen for metabolic and other inheritable disorders. The Alabama Newborn Screening Program helps identify babies who may have one of these disorders and can alert the baby’s doctor to the need for further testing and special care. Complications from these serious but uncommon disorders can usually be prevented with early diagnosis and medical treatment. This pamphlet was written to answer your questions about the screening tests.

May I refuse the tests?

As a parent, you may refuse newborn screening only if your religious beliefs and practices do not allow this testing. If you refuse to have the tests done, you may be asked to sign a form stating that you refused to have your baby tested for these very serious disorders.

Your baby’s blood is tested for the following disorders:
- Phenylketonuria (PKU)
- Congenital Hypothyroidism
- Sickle Cell Disease and related red blood cell disorders
- Galactosemia
- Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (CAH)
- Biotinidase Deficiency
- Amino Acid Disorders
- Fatty Acid Oxidation Disorders
- Organic Acid Disorders
- Cystic Fibrosis

Note: A hearing test is also administered as part of newborn screening. Information on this test is found in a separate brochure.

My baby looks healthy, should the tests still be done?

Yes! Even if your baby looks healthy, he/she may have one of these disorders. Most babies identified by the Alabama Newborn Screening Program show no signs of the disorder immediately after birth.

How will my baby be tested?

A sample of blood is taken by pricking the baby’s heel. The heelstick is then placed on special paper. Both samples are sent to the State Clinical Laboratory for testing. The lab uses these samples to test for all of the disorders. The heelstick sample is usually taken on the day the baby is discharged from the hospital.

How will I learn of my baby’s test results?

The results of the tests are sent directly to your baby’s doctor and the hospital where your baby was born. You can ask about the results when you take your baby in for a regular check-up. Generally, parents are notified only if retesting or further testing is needed. If your baby’s doctor asks you to bring your baby in for retesting, do so as soon as possible. Even if your baby’s screening test is normal, there are some disorders for which the Alabama Newborn Screening Program does not test. It is very important for your baby to have regular check-ups and good medical care.