

A Form

B Form

Newborn Screens can have dramatic impact to the welfare of the infant and the family, and it is important to understand the significance of screening both from a medical outcome and a legal liability standpoint.

1. Storage of the filter paper both pre-use and post-use can be very important. If the paper is stored in a dry, hot environment such as an unventilated warehouse it will affect the performance of the paper. Always try to store paper at room temperature and room humidity. Post-use storage should be in keeping with NBS lab guidance (©ID Biological Systems Report).
2. The type of lancet used can have a definite effect on the specimen collected. The “switch blade” type lancet achieves better blood flow than the puncture type. This could make a difference in your blood collection (©ID Biological Systems Report).
3. Only allow well trained individuals to collect newborn screening blood in order to reduce unsatisfactory specimens (Alabama NBS Coordinator Conference 2009).
4. Track the performance of these collectors and re-train or substitute as necessary if unsatisfactory or invalid results occur (Alabama NBS Coordinator Conference 2009).
5. **Perform a quality control inspection** of all specimens before mailing them to the state lab. At a minimum check for the following:
 - Complete and correct demographic information. **Any corrections should be legible and initialed.**
 - Complete and correct newborn hearing test information.
 - Record the name of the person that collected the sample.
 - Inspect the blood spots for specimen quality and quantity before mailing.
 - Allow specimens to dry first and then review a second time prior to mailing. A specimen may appear uniform when wet but when dry may reveal uneven saturation (dark spots).
 - Confirm results are received on each specimen submitted.

If you believe you are having issues with specimen collection, please contact the NBS Nurse Educator at 334-206-5729 or the NBS State Health Laboratory at 334-260-3400. You may also refer to the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute® (CLSI) Screening Collection Manual (copies provided to all birthing centers).

Remember: *Collection technique will not improve overnight. It takes practice to become proficient with newborn screening specimen collection.*