

The Public Health Lab: Newborn Screening Program (1:52)

Female Narrator: The Newborn Screening Program checks babies shortly after they are born for more than 50 rare and serious conditions. Together with hospitals, clinics, midwives, specialists, and families, we work towards giving every baby born in Minnesota the opportunity to start life healthy.

Newborn screening includes blood spot screening, hearing screening, and pulse oximetry screening. Hearing and pulse oximetry screenings happen at the place of birth. The results from these are available the same day as the screen.

For blood spot screening, a nurse takes a few drops of blood from the baby's heel and puts it onto special filter paper. These blood spots are then sent to the Newborn Screening Lab, where lab workers test the blood spot for a number of disorders that can cause serious health problems and even death.

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If the blood spot screening results are within normal limits, we send a report back to the birth provider. If the blood spot screening results are abnormal, we contact the baby's provider. We share what was found on the screen, what follow-up is needed, and when that should be done.

Minnesota has about 200 babies born every day, so the newborn screening lab is always busy. Between the blood spot, pulse oximetry, and hearing screenings, about 450 newborns are identified every year with a condition that is on the screening panel and they can then begin to receive treatment.

Thanks to the Newborn Screening Lab and its partners, Minnesota newborns can start their lives as healthy as possible.

(End: 1:52)