

Positive Result:

Blood Spot Screen Result Notification



Elevated Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH)

What was found on the newborn screen?

The newborn screen that was collected at birth found that your baby has high levels of a hormone called thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH).

What does this mean?

High levels of TSH can indicate that your child may have congenital hypothyroidism (CH). CH is a type of thyroid disease. The word congenital means the problem starts at birth and is different from thyroid disease in adults. A positive result does not mean your baby has thyroid disease, but more testing is needed to know for sure.

What happens next?

Your baby's doctor will order more testing. Most likely there will be two labs drawn at your baby's clinic. These two labs are called TSH and free T4 (thyroxine).

If the results from this additional testing are normal, no more testing or treatment will be needed.

If the results from this additional testing remain elevated, your baby's doctor will let you know what additional testing or treatment is needed. You should be referred to a pediatric endocrinologist who cares for children with thyroid disease.

What is congenital hypothyroidism (CH)?

CH is a condition present in a baby at birth that affects the body's thyroid gland, a small organ in the lower neck. The thyroid gland makes thyroid hormone. People with CH are not able to make enough thyroid hormone. Thyroid hormone is needed for healthy growth and development.

What health problems can it cause?

CH is a lifelong condition. If untreated, it can cause:

- Jaundice (yellow skin or whites of the eyes)
- Weak muscle tone
- Learning disabilities
- Delayed growth and weight gain

Children with CH can benefit from prompt and careful treatment.

What treatment options are available?

Although CH cannot be cured, it can be treated. The most common treatment for CH is a medication that replaces the thyroid hormone that isn't being made correctly. If treated before symptoms develop, children can have healthy growth and development.

Children with CH should see their regular doctor and a doctor who specializes in thyroid disease (an endocrinologist).

Resources

Genetics Home Reference:
<http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov>

Save Babies Through Screening Foundation:
www.savebabies.org

Baby's First Test:
www.babysfirsttest.org