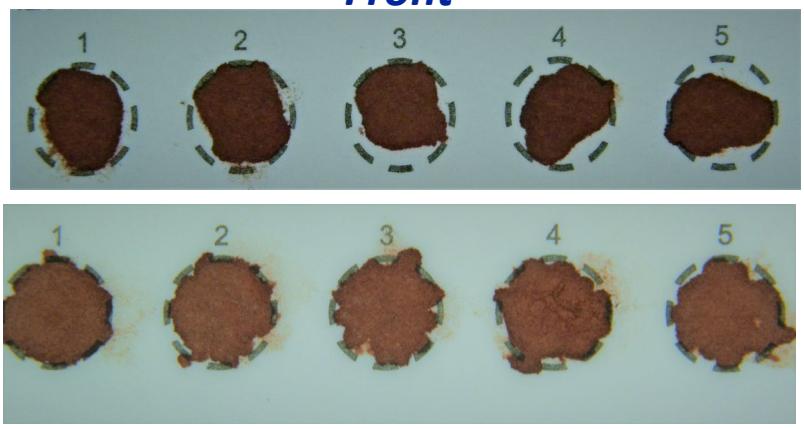
SPOT*focus*

Newborn Screening Quality Improvement Hints

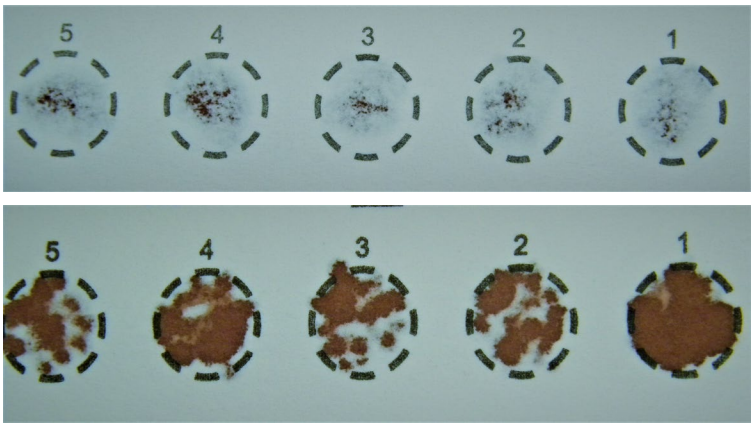
INCOMPLETE SATURATION

The design of the filter paper allows it to hold a specific amount of blood. Incomplete saturation will have too little blood for proper testing. An insufficient amount of blood may cause test results to be inaccurate; therefore, these specimens will be unsatisfactory for testing.

Front



Back



These unsatisfactory examples show both sides of the same filter

In 2025, over 3,000 newborn screening specimens were rejected because the blood did not completely and uniformly penetrate to the other side of the filter paper. All of these specimens required a recollection and caused critical delays to testing.

TIPS TO ENSURE A COMPLETELY SATURATED SPECIMEN

- Warm the newborn's heel around the intended area of the skin puncture site for three to five minutes.
- Place the sterile, retractable disposable heel lancet on the newborn's heel, apply gentle pressure to the lancet, and activate it to puncture the heel. Wipe off first drop of blood.
- Gently squeeze the newborn's heel to allow a LARGE round drop of blood to form.
- Lightly touch the LARGE drop of blood to the center of a pre-printed circle on the filter paper. Do not touch or rub the newborn's heel on the filter paper.
- Apply blood to one side only while viewing from the other side to ensure complete saturation of the entire pre-printed circle.
- Examine both sides of the filter paper to ensure that the blood completely and uniformly penetrated to the other side of the filter paper.
- If the blood flow diminishes, repeat the specimen collection procedure using a new lancet.
- To access specimen collection requirements, visit: bit.ly/4hhdyU2.

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