SPOT focus

Newborn Screening Quality Improvement Hints

To help timely identification of cases

RECOLLECT ANY UNSATISFACTORY SCREENS IN A TIMELY MANNER

For specimens deemed unsatisfactory for testing, the result report will request recollection.

See examples of result reports here.

UNSATISFACTORY SPECIMEN-RESUBMIT

The specimen submitted for this patient was deemed unsatisfactory for the reasons listed below. An immediate recollection is necessary to further evaluate this infant.

1) Blood did not completely fill specimen circles. Resubmit within 7 days.
2) Blood did not soak through paper due to incomplete saturation. Resubmit within 7 days.
3) Blood was caked, clotted, or layered onto the filter paper. Resubmit within 7 days.

TIPS FOR COLLECTION TO AVOID REJECTION

- Use the proper sized heel lancet (<2.0 mm length).
- Wipe away the first drop of blood and allow a second large blood drop to form.
- Lightly touch the filter paper with a large drop of blood while watching it soak through completely from the opposite side.
- Apply blood to only one side of filter paper and complete one circle at a time. Avoid reapplying blood to a circle that has already been filled. Complete collection on all five circles.
- Do not allow filter paper to come in contact with alcohol, antiseptic solutions, water, hand lotions or powders. Avoid excessive handling of the specimen collection form. If necessary, handle with clean gloves, avoiding the circle collection areas.
- Complete all demographic information accurately and legibly.
- Allow specimen to dry for 3-4 hours and ship specimens by overnight courier.

Why is it important to recollect unsatisfactory specimens in a timely manner?

Early detection and treatment of disorders identified by newborn screening can prevent serious health complications, such as growth problems, developmental delays, deafness, blindness, intellectual disabilities, seizures, and sudden or early death. Submitting recollections for specimens with unsatisfactory results is important for timely identification of newborns with these conditions.

DSHS implemented a two-screen system to maximize the effectiveness of testing for all disorders on the Texas Newborn Screening Panel. The first screen should be collected between 24 to 48 hours of age and the second screen between 1 to 2 weeks of age. In many instances, both the first and second NBS screens are used to determine results. In Texas, the second screen routinely identifies babies at risk for severe medical complications even though the first screen may be normal.

Other Helpful Resources

- **Newborn screening collection video:**
  https://youtu.be/S51Y9ShD6HI?si=hCdRoIZcCT7i9K2R

- **DSHS Newborn Screening Laboratory Contact:**
  Email: *NewbornScreeningLab@dshs.state.tx.us*
  or call 512-776-7585