



WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION?

- Talk to your doctor for more information about sickle cell trait.
- Visit trusted health website such as American Society of Hematology Sickle Cell Trait: hematology.org/education/patients/anemia/sickle-cell-trait.
- Ask your or your baby's doctor about newborn screening records.
- Visit dshs.texas.gov/newborn-screening-program/sickle-cell-disease/sickle-cell-trait or scan the QR code

NEWBORN SCREENING PROGRAM

Texas Department of State
Health Services

P.O. Box 149347 MC-1918
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

512-776-3957



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FACTS ABOUT

Sickle Cell Trait



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

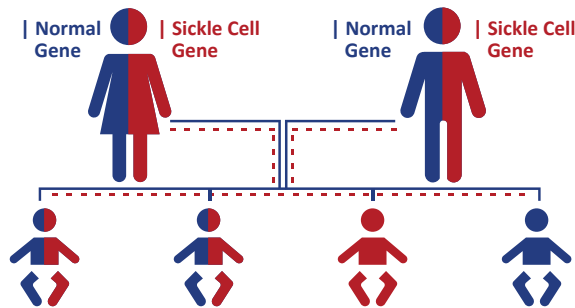
Texas Department of State
Health Services

WHAT IS SICKLE CELL TRAIT?

Sickle cell trait is something you are born with. It is an inherited blood condition. Sickle cell trait is **not** the same as sickle cell disease (SCD). A person with sickle cell trait has:

- One normal blood (hemoglobin) gene
- One sickle cell gene

Parents pass these genes to their children. If both parents have sickle cell trait:



*1 in 2
chance the
baby will
have sickle
cell trait*

*1 in 4
chance
the baby
will have
SCD*

*1 in 4 chance
the baby will
not have
SCD or sickle
cell trait*

Most people with sickle cell trait feel healthy and show no outward signs. It is not contagious.

Some people may feel sick in certain situations, such as:

- High altitudes
- Very hard exercise
- Dehydration or illness

People with sickle cell trait will not get sickle cell disease.

WHO CAN HAVE SICKLE CELL TRAIT?

Anyone can have sickle cell trait.

It is more common in people whose ancestors come from:

- Africa (African Americans have the highest rate of sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait in the United States.)
- Asia
- Central America
- South America
- The Mediterranean
- The Middle East

Since 1983, the Texas Department of State Health Services Newborn Screening Program has been testing newborns for health problems early using blood screening. This screening checks for many health problems, including sickle cell disease and trait.

HOW CAN YOU FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE SICKLE CELL TRAIT?

It is important to know your sickle cell trait status because it can affect your health and the health of your future children. Knowing your status can help you make informed health decisions, plan before having a baby, and provide important health information if your child plays in school sports.

If you were born in Texas, your newborn screening results may already be on file. You can also ask your doctor for a simple blood test if you do not know whether you have sickle cell trait.

Your doctor can help you:

- Request and obtain your newborn screening results
- Understand what the results mean
- Decide if you or your child need additional testing



WHAT IS SICKLE CELL DISEASE?

Sickle cell disease is a serious inherited blood issue.

It changes the shape of red blood cells. Instead of being round, the cells become shaped like a crescent or “sickle.”

These sickle-shaped cells can cause blockages in the blood vessels and block blood flow.

This can cause pain and other problems, often affecting the kidneys, brain, and lungs.