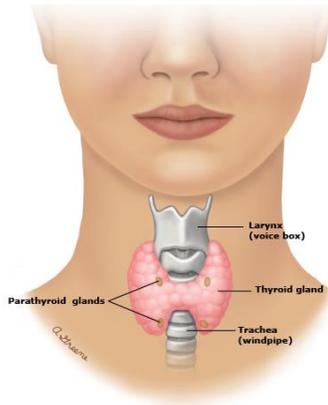




Newborn Screening FACT Sheet Congenital Hypothyroidism (CH)

What is CH?

CH is a condition where the thyroid gland doesn't make enough thyroid hormone. The thyroid gland is in the neck.



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Thyroid hormone is responsible for helping the body's metabolism, temperature stability, and brain development among other things. CH occurs because the thyroid gland didn't develop properly. Prior to newborn screening for this condition, it was one of the most common causes of developmental delay and intellectual disability. Newborn screening allows early identification and treatment for these babies.

What symptoms occur with CH?

It is important to note that most infants may NOT experience symptoms.

For infants who do have symptoms, they can include:

- Skin changes like jaundice or paleness. Eventually people with untreated CH get very dry skin.
- Poor appetite or feeding. Infants with CH may not want to feed or it might be

hard to keep them awake during feedings. They may be very constipated.

- Poor growth and weight gain if they are not treated.
- Low heart rate and low blood pressure. Occasionally poor blood circulation makes feet and hands colder than the rest of the body.

Developmental delays are common if untreated. Babies with CH are often quiet and don't cry much. They may not be interested in sights or sounds around them. They may sleep for a long time, then have to be woken up for feeding. They can have poor muscle tone as well. Infants who are not treated will likely have intellectual disabilities.

What is the treatment for CH?

Your child will need thyroid hormone to replace what their body is missing. This will likely be a lifelong medication but your doctor helps determine how much hormone to give to promote healthy growth. Babies usually have normal growth and development when they get their thyroid medicine regularly.

Resources:

Pediatric Endocrine Society-

<https://pedsendo.org/patient-resource/congenital-hypothyroidism>

Cleveland Clinic-

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/congenital-hypothyroidism>