

Tests for a Newborn Baby in Intensive Care



Babies in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU) are always being checked by their nurses and other healthcare providers. Your baby will need many tests, most often blood tests. These are needed to help track your baby's health and to find possible problems.

Common tests your baby may have in the NICU are:

- Blood tests to check your baby's blood group (A, B, O) and the Rh factor (positive or negative)
- Blood tests to see if your baby has too few red blood cells (anemia) or too many red blood cells (polycythemia)
- Tests that look for infection in your baby's blood, urine, or spinal fluid
- Blood tests to check how much oxygen and carbon dioxide are in your baby's blood
- Blood tests to check your baby's blood sugar (glucose) levels
- Blood tests to check your baby's electrolyte levels (magnesium, calcium, and potassium)
- X-rays to check the placement of tubes or view the condition of the lungs, heart, or abdomen
- Ultrasound to check for bleeding in a baby's brain
- Echocardiogram to help find heart problems
- EKG or ECG (electrocardiogram) to see how fast your baby's heart is beating and if the rhythm of the heartbeat is regular

Because each baby's needs are different, the tests may be different. Always ask your baby's healthcare provider for more information about which tests are needed for your baby.

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