



Newborn Screening Tests

Shortly after birth, your baby will have screening tests to detect a variety of congenital conditions ([/English/health-issues/conditions/developmental-disabilities/Pages/Congenital-Abnormalities.aspx](#)). These tests are designed to detect problems early in order to treat them promptly, prevent disabilities, and save lives.



Screening Tests

There is some variability between states for which tests are offered, but all states examine the baby's blood for metabolic and genetic conditions ([/English/ages-stages/prenatal/Pages/Detecting-Genetic-Abnormalities.aspx](#)). Newborns also have a hearing test ([/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Purpose-of-Newborn-Hearing-Screening.aspx](#)) done. A screening for critical congenital heart disease using pulse oximetry (measuring the oxygen in the infant's blood) is now required in the hospital before newborn discharge.

Before Baby is Born

Before your baby is born, talk to your pediatrician about which screening tests your baby will undergo, including their benefits and any risks, and ask if it is necessary for you to consent to this testing.

Test Results

Ask when you can find out the test results, and what they mean if your newborn has a result that is out of the normal range. This may not necessarily mean that your baby actually has a congenital or genetic condition, so inquire about whether and when retesting would be done. Also, double-check to make certain the tests are actually performed before your baby leaves the hospital.

Additional Resources:

- [Listen Up About Why Newborn Hearing Screening is Important \(/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Listen-Up-About-Why-Newborn-Hearing-Screening-is-Important.aspx\)](#)
- [Purpose of Newborn Hearing Screening \(/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Purpose-of-Newborn-Hearing-Screening.aspx\)](#)
- [Newborn Jaundice Screening \(Audio\) \(/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Newborn-Jaundice-Screening.aspx\)](#)

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The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

