

# YOUR NEWBORN SCREENING GUIDE TO *Newborn Bloodspot Screening*

## What is newborn screening?

**While most babies are born healthy, some infants are born with serious but treatable medical conditions.**

Newborn screening is a public health program that helps healthcare providers identify these conditions before they make a baby sick. Newborn screening usually happens 24 hours after your baby is born and can lead to treatment within the first few days of life.

## What is bloodspot screening?

Newborn bloodspot screening (sometimes called the ‘heel poke’) is one part of the newborn screening process, in which a small amount of your baby’s blood is collected from the heel. The blood is placed on special filter paper and sent to a specialized laboratory for testing.

## Why is newborn screening important?

Some babies look and act healthy at first, but may have health problems that are causing harm, even before they have symptoms. **These conditions can be present in any family, even those without a family history.**

## What if my baby’s results are not normal?

Your baby’s healthcare provider will request that you bring your baby in for further testing. Your baby’s screening results may be abnormal or “out-of-range” for many reasons. Because newborn screening is not a diagnostic test, abnormal results do not always mean your baby is sick. Babies who are premature or low birth weight are more likely to have abnormal screening results. **It is very important to follow your healthcare provider’s instructions, especially if they request you to return for follow-up care.**

## What happens to my baby’s bloodspot card?

Alaska securely stores your baby’s bloodspot card for 3 years, and then the cards are destroyed. Parents or caregivers must sign a consent form for cards to be released. Alaska never shares or sells data or bloodspots for research. Your baby’s DNA or blood are not stored in a “biobank” or other database.

**Alaska's newborn screening program screens for more than 50 different conditions.**

## **Did You Know?**

**Every year, 1 in 12 Alaska babies are diagnosed with a newborn screening condition. When treated early, babies identified through newborn screening can grow up healthy with normal development.**

**If you have concerns about your baby's health, contact your baby's healthcare provider right away.**

### **For More Information:**

**Website:**

<http://bit.ly/2JnUUNG>



**Email:**

[newborn.screening@alaska.gov](mailto:newborn.screening@alaska.gov)

**Call:**

907.269.3400

### **For Additional Resources:**

[BabysFirstTest.org](http://BabysFirstTest.org)

[Spanish.BabysFirstTest.org](http://Spanish.BabysFirstTest.org)

