

Health Advisory: Newborn Screening Continues During COVID-19 Outbreak

Minnesota Department of Health, Thurs Mar 25 09:00 CDT 2020

Action Steps:

Local and tribal health department: Please forward to clinics, hospitals, birth centers, and audiologists in your jurisdiction.

Hospitals, clinics and other facilities: Please forward to primary care clinicians, pediatricians, nursery staff, NICU physicians, laboratory staff, audiologists, and all other health care providers who might see newborns and infants.

Health care providers:

- Continuing all newborn screening; bloodspot, hearing, and CCHD (Critical Congenital Heart Disease) screening during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Continue follow-up testing as usual.
- Follow Minnesota Department of Health guidance to limit spread of infections to babies and mothers during screening.

Newborn Screening and COVID-19

The life-saving work of newborn screening continues during the COVID-19 outbreak. All obligations, laws, and MDH policies regarding collection of screening samples and completing hearing & CCHD screenings remain in place. Bloodspot collection and shipping to MDH should continue as per protocol. Hearing and heart screening and reporting to MDH should continue as per protocol.

- All screenings should be done before discharge. If baby is discharged prior to 24 hours an additional bloodspot screen needs to be collected in clinic during the first week of life.
- Notification of abnormal lab or hearing refer results to primary physician/clinic by MDH staff will continue. When consultation with a specialist is advised, the primary physician should discuss with the specialist the best way to evaluate the baby given the community prevalence of COVID-19. Recommendations by MDH for seeking consultation and follow-up remain in place.
- MDH will continue to request:
 - Recollection of unsatisfactory specimens
 - Repeat screening after borderline bloodspot results
 - Outpatient rescreening/diagnosis for hearing refer/did not pass result
 - Follow-up testing for failed pulse oximetry results

This suggestion will be re-evaluated if the community prevalence of COVID-19 increases and clinics are encouraged to limit appointments for healthy newborns and infants.

- For consideration:
 - When possible, complete audiological testing prior to hospital discharge.
 - Be prepared to complete full audiological assessment at 1st outpatient appointment to avoid the need for multiple appointments.

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OUTBREAK

For More Information

- [CDC Coronavirus website](#)
- [CDC Information on COVID-19 and Pregnant Women and Children](#)
- Call the Newborn Screening Program genetic counselors at 651-201-3548.

A copy of this HAN is available at: [MDH Health Alert Network](#)

The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.