

Did Not Pass Result:

Pulse Oximetry Screen Result Notification

Minnesota Newborn
Screening Program



Your baby did not pass the pulse oximetry screen.

What is critical congenital heart disease (CCHD)?

Congenital heart defects are the most common group of birth defects. Heart defects cause problems with the structure of the heart or the way blood flows through it. CCHD refers to heart defects that need to be fixed early to help prevent other health problems.

Why is screening for CCHD important?

While prenatal ultrasounds may detect some cases of CCHD, not all can be detected before birth. Without screening shortly after birth, babies with CCHD are sometimes sent home without care because they appear healthy. At home, these babies can develop serious health problems and often require emergency care. If CCHD is detected early, however, infants can be treated and lead healthier lives.

How are babies screened for CCHD?

Babies are screened with a simple test called pulse oximetry. Pulse oximetry is a quick and painless procedure which uses sensors placed on the baby's skin (typically the hand and foot) to determine the amount of oxygen in the blood.

What does it mean if my baby did not pass the pulse oximetry screen?

It means that the screen detected low oxygen levels in your baby's blood. Low oxygen levels can be a sign of CCHD or other conditions such as breathing problems or infections. More testing is needed to find out why a low oxygen level was detected.

What happens next?

Before you and your baby go home, your baby's care provider will arrange for further testing and evaluation to determine if your baby has CCHD.

Further testing may include a repeat pulse oximetry screen, an echocardiogram (an ultrasound of the heart), an electrocardiogram (tests the electrical activity of the heart), and/or a chest x-ray. If you are at a hospital that cannot provide this additional testing, your baby may need to be transferred to a hospital that can.

If any of the results from the additional testing are of concern for CCHD, then your baby may need to see a pediatric cardiologist. A pediatric cardiologist is a doctor that specializes in problems with the hearts of infants, children, and adolescents. If you are at a hospital that does not have a pediatric cardiologist, your baby may need to be transferred to a different hospital that has a pediatric cardiologist on staff.

What is the treatment for CCHD?

Babies with CCHD typically need surgery within the first year of life. Each baby with CCHD will require a unique treatment plan developed for his or her particular heart defect.

Resources for parents

American Heart Association: www.heart.org

Lasting Imprint: www.lastingimprint.org

Mended Little Hearts: www.mendedhearts.org

Parents for Heart: www.parentsforheart.org

The Children's Heart Foundation:
www.childrensheartfoundation.org

More questions about pulse oximetry screening? Feel free to call the Newborn Screening Program at (800) 664-7772 or visit us online at www.health.state.mn.us/newbornscreening

