

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT (KDHE) GUIDANCE ON RE-COLLECTION OF NEWBORN SCREENING SPECIMENS DURING COVID-19

Most babies are born healthy. Some, however, are born with rare but serious medical conditions that may not be visible at birth. Newborn screening is an essential public health service that allows health professionals to identify and treat rare conditions. [Newborn screening in Kansas](#) consists of three types of tests:

- Hearing screen to detect hearing loss
- Pulse oximetry screening to detect critical congenital heart defects
- Heel stick to collect a small blood sample to detect 30 genetic or metabolic conditions

The best time to conduct these screens is between 24 and 48 hours after birth.

Leaving the Hospital Early

Leaving the hospital early (prior to 24 hours after birth) results in the screening being done before the optimal timeframe. Early newborn screening increases the chance that these conditions go undetected or not identified. This will also require you to return to the hospital or another laboratory or outpatient clinic for a repeat screening after you go home, and sometimes before you are scheduled to see your baby's doctor. Additionally, these screening practices are timely to help ensure the best possible health for your baby.

If Your Baby Needs a Repeat Screening

Leaving your home for essential health care services, such as postpartum and well child visits, is safe, allowed, and encouraged.

It is important to complete repeat screenings as soon as possible. Delays increase the chance of health complications and developmental delays if your baby does have a rare condition. Many facilities and clinics are taking extra steps to minimize your exposure to coronavirus during the current pandemic. Talk to the facility staff and your baby's doctor about the extra steps they are taking and follow their directions on how to prepare for a safe visit.

Additional Resources

KDHE has previously issued guidance for mothers and infants as well as guidance on personal practices for preventing the spread of disease. Guidance and FAQs are available on the [COVID-19 Resource Center](#) at <https://www.coronavirus.kdheks.gov/> and through the links below.

- [KDHE FAQ's for Moms-to-be and Infants](#)
- [KDHE COVID-19 Information for Individuals and Families](#)

More information about newborn screening is available through the links below.

- The Kansas Newborn Screening Brochure – [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- [Conditions Screened for in Kansas and General Program Information \(babysfirsttest.org\)](#)
- [ExpectingHealth.org – Navigate Newborn Screening](#)