



Meeting National Recommendations for Timely Collection and Submission of Newborn Screening (NBS) Specimens

The Secretary's Advisory Committee on Heritable Disorders in Newborns and Children (ACHDNC) formalized a series of recommendations regarding timeliness in newborn screening. These recommendations included:

1. Initial NBS specimens should be collected in the appropriate time frame for the newborn's condition but no later than 48 hours after birth.
2. NBS specimens should be received at the laboratory as soon as possible; ideally **within 24 hours of collection**.
3. Presumptive positive results should be communicated within five days of life for the most time critical disorders (initial screens).
4. All disorder results should be reported within seven days of life (initial screens).

Currently, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Laboratory only receives approximately 20% of initial newborn screening specimens within 24 hours of collection. **The DSHS Laboratory is asking for your help to improve timeliness.**

What can you do to help meet these goals?

For the first newborn screening specimen collected from a baby:

- ✓ Review internal processes to identify delays.
- ✓ Collect specimens between 24 and 48 hours of age.
- ✓ Collect specimens at least 4-5 hours before courier pickup.
- ✓ Allow specimens to dry 3 hours before packaging.
- ✓ Ship specimens overnight; avoid holding or batching specimens.
- ✓ Assign specific staff members the following daily tasks:
 - Gather specimens 1 hour before a scheduled courier pickup.
 - Check specimen quality and demographic information for accuracy and legibility.
 - Ensure all dried specimens are included in the next available shipment.
 - Ensure courier documentation is correct and complete.
- ✓ Use the monthly [report card](#) to assess and monitor your specimen transit times.
 - For more information on facility report cards, please visit the [Healthcare Provider Resources](#) page of the NBS website.

Questions? Contact the Texas DSHS NBS Laboratory:

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