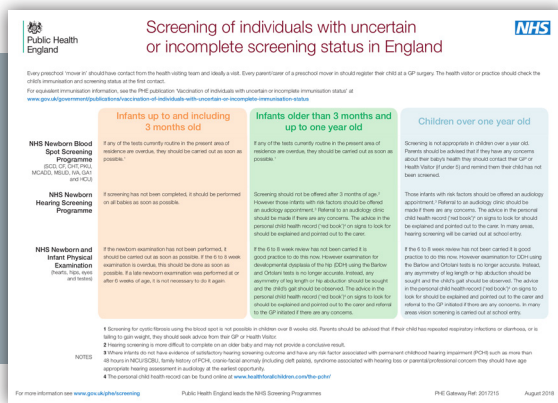




NHS newborn screening

Children under a year with missed screening tests: information for professionals



Please ensure you read this information sheet in conjunction with the **Screening of individuals with uncertain or incomplete screening status** guidance, produced by PHE and available from: www.gov.uk/phe/screening (evidence and guidance)

A parent information sheet is also available at the same location.

Screening in the NHS

The NHS offers parents a number of screening tests for their newborn babies. You can see a list of the conditions screened for on the back of this information sheet.

Missed tests

There are checking processes in place to prevent babies born in England missing the offer of screening. But sometimes we do find children with no record of newborn screening. This may be due to babies being born outside of England or not being offered or completing screening in line with national screening pathways.

A recent audit of the Child Health Information System (CHIS) has found some children whose screening records are missing or incomplete. We therefore assume the tests have not been carried out.

The missed screening guidance (pictured above), produced by Public Health England (PHE), provides detailed information about which screening tests should be offered later if missed in the newborn period. Please familiarise yourselves with this.

What we are doing

Health Visitors (HVs) will be contacting parents of missed children. If HVs are unable to make contact with families after 2 attempts they should ask for an alert to be put on the GP information system if the family subsequently makes contact.

The health visitor should:

- check that the child is well
- offer and facilitate appropriate screening tests according to the PHE guidance
- answer any parental questions
- ensure GP and CHIS records are updated as necessary

Conditions screened for in newborn babies

Heart, eyes, hips and testes

Within 72 hours of giving birth, parents are offered a physical examination for their baby. This includes screening tests to find out whether the baby has a problem with their eyes, heart, hips or, in boys, their testes. Early investigation and possible treatment can then take place. The screening tests are carried out again between 6 and 8 weeks of age as some conditions do not develop or appear until then.

Find out more at www.nhs.uk/newborninfantexam

Hearing loss

The newborn hearing screening test is usually carried out within the first few weeks of life. It will often happen before babies leave the maternity unit. In some areas it will be carried out at home or in a clinic. Screening is most effective for babies younger than 3 months. Older babies may need to be tested by the local audiology department.

Screening is important because hearing loss is not always apparent. As an additional check, parents can use the **making sounds** and **reactions to sounds** checklists in their Personal Child Health Record ('red book') to help monitor their child's development.

Find out more at www.nhs.uk/newbornhearing

Blood spot

The newborn blood spot test is usually taken on day 5 after birth. The blood is tested to see

if the child has one of 9 serious but rare medical conditions. These are:

- sickle cell disease (SCD)
- cystic fibrosis (CF)
- congenital hypothyroidism (CHT)
- phenylketonuria (PKU)
- medium-chain acyl-CoA dehydrogenase deficiency (MCADD)
- maple syrup urine disease (MSUD)
- isovaleric acidaemia (IVA)
- glutaric aciduria type 1 (GA1)
- homocystinuria (HCU)

If the child is well and is developing normally it is unlikely that they have any of these conditions, though problems may not be apparent. Screening is therefore still important. Parents should contact their GP if their child is slow to develop, has regular diarrhoea or repeated chest infections.

Find out more at www.nhs.uk/bloodspot

For more information:

- download the **Screening Tests For Your and Your Baby** leaflet (search for it on www.gov.uk)
- access national screening guidance at www.gov.uk/phe/screening
- talk to your local screening and immunisation team
- contact the national screening helpdesk at phe.screeninghelpdesk@nhs.net

Equivalent information about missed vaccinations is available. Search www.gov.uk for **Vaccination of individuals with uncertain or incomplete immunisation status**.