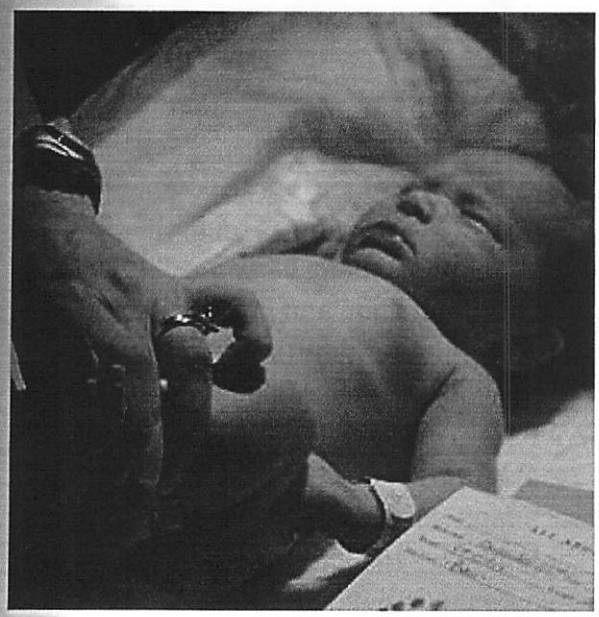
Newborn Screening



Newborn screening is a simple procedure to find out if baby has a congenital metabolic disorder that may lead to mental retardation and even death if left untreated.

Importance of Newborn Screening

Newborn screening allows for early detection of disorders. If detected, treatment may be done immediately. The goal of newborn screening is to give all newborns a chance to live normal lives and safeguard them to reach their full potential.

How the Test is Done

1. Screening is done within 48 hours or at least 24 hours from birth but not later than 3 days after complete delivery. A newborn placed in intensive care may be exempted from the 3-day requirement but must be tested by 7 days of age.
2. A few drops of blood is drawn from pricking the baby's heel.
3. Then it is blotched on a special absorbent card and dried for at least 4 hours.
4. The procedure may be done by the physician, nurse, midwife, or medical technologist.
5. If a screening test suggests a problem, the baby's doctor will follow up with further testing. If those tests confirm a problem, the doctor may refer the baby to a specialist for treatment. Following doctor's treatment plan can save the baby from lifelong health-related and developmental problems.

References

- Department of Health Philippines. Administrative Order No. 121 s. 2003 "Strengthening Implementation of the National Newborn Screening System."
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