

# Newborn Screening

*For Parents-to-be*



## *Helping babies start life healthy*

Every parent-to-be wants a healthy baby. Newborn screening checks babies for serious disorders that often cannot be seen at birth. These disorders can be found through blood spot, hearing, and pulse oximetry screening. If a disorder is found early through one of these screens, early interventions can help give these babies a healthy start to life.



**Blood spot screening** checks for over 50 rare but treatable disorders that can affect the immune system, how the body makes energy, or other important processes. Early detection can help prevent serious health problems or even death.



**Hearing screening** checks for hearing loss in the range where speech is heard. Identifying hearing loss early improves a baby's ability to access language and develop on track with their hearing peers.



**Pulse oximetry screening** checks for critical congenital heart disease (CCHD). If detected early, babies with CCHD can often be treated with surgery or other medical interventions.

Newborn screening makes early detection, diagnosis, and interventions possible that help give affected babies a healthy start to life.

# Greta's Story

*"We wouldn't have known something was wrong until it may have been too late."*

Our daughter was born with congenital hypothyroidism, which prior to widespread screening was the most common cause of preventable developmental delay. Her condition was first detected by her newborn screen just days after birth, and because of it, she now has the chances of any other child to grow up healthy.

We would love her no matter what, but the idea that she might have suffered from something preventable is difficult to comprehend. She was a sleepy, calm, and healthy-looking baby when she was born; had she not been screened, we wouldn't have known something was wrong until it may have been too late.

With prompt results from the Minnesota Department of Health and follow-up from our baby's pediatrician that confirmed the diagnosis, she is responding to medication, and she is much more active and alert. The Newborn Screening Program has made such a difference for our daughter. Her results, and the quick treatment they set in motion, have preserved her ability to grow up as strong, as healthy, and as bright as she can.

To us, because of all it will allow her to do, her newborn screen will remain among the most important moments of her life.

**For more family stories, visit:**

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/newbornscreening/families/minnestories/>  
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To learn more about newborn screening or your parental options, ask your healthcare provider, hospital staff, or the Minnesota Newborn Screening program at: [www.health.state.mn.us/newbornscreening](http://www.health.state.mn.us/newbornscreening) (651) 201-5466 or (800) 664-7772

