What is the State of Maryland’s role in CCHD screening?

- In 2011, a law was passed requiring hospitals and birthing centers to screen all babies between 24-48 hours of birth for CCHD.
- The CCHD Program was established in the Office for Genetics and People with Special Health Care Needs.
- Pulse Oximetry Screening training was made available to hospital staff.
- Hospitals report screening results electronically to the CCHD Program.
- The CCHD Program determines outcomes for babies who failed the screen.
- The CCHD Program also provides surveillance and quality assurance reports back to the hospitals.

Did you know?

- Approximately 2 out of every 1,000 infants are born with a critical congenital heart defect.
- Screening for a critical congenital heart defect can save a baby’s life if a serious heart defect is diagnosed before the baby goes home.

Questions?

- Ask your doctor or nurse if you have questions or concerns.
- Call the CCHD Program at 443-681-3916
- Visit our website: php.health.maryland.gov/genetics

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**Why do babies need to be screened for critical congenital heart defects?**

- Some babies are born with heart defects that occur during the formation of the heart during pregnancy. These are called congenital heart defects since they are present at birth.

- Some congenital heart defects require immediate treatment in order to prevent death. These are called critical congenital heart defects or CCHD.

- Screening helps determine which babies may have a CCHD that needs immediate treatment.

**How is CCHD screening performed?**

- A device called a pulse oximeter is used.

- A sensor is placed on the baby’s right hand and either foot with the use of a sticky strip (like a band-aid).

- CCHD may cause a baby to have different oxygen levels in the right hand from the oxygen levels in the feet.

- The right hand or a foot should be 95% or greater with less than 3% difference between the two extremities.

**When is CCHD screening performed?**

- It is performed 24-48 hours after birth or before discharge.

- CCHD screening should be done before your baby leaves the hospital.

- If your baby is born at home or in a birthing center, discuss how to have your baby screened for CCHD with your midwife or your baby’s doctor.

**What happens if the screening is abnormal?**

- Your baby’s doctor will check for reasons for low levels of oxygen in the blood.

- An echocardiogram (an ultrasound of the heart) may be ordered to test for critical congenital heart disease.

- Your baby’s doctor may also consult with a pediatric cardiologist.

- Your baby should not leave the hospital until further testing has been completed!

**Will the CCHD screening hurt my baby?**

- No. The pulse oximeter uses a light beam so this is a painless screening.

- The screening can be done while the baby is awake or asleep.

**Please note…..**

CCHD screening is more accurate than a physical exam alone, but it does NOT identify all critical congenital heart defects. If your baby’s CCHD screen was normal but he or she:

- seems extra sleepy
- is having a hard time eating
- is breathing rapidly

**Contact your baby’s doctor immediately!**