

BULLETIN #3 – June 7, 2006

1. Updates to Special Considerations

The sections on page 4 of the MOHLTC brochure describing special considerations for premature infants and for those having received a blood transfusion have been clarified to read as follows:

Prematurity or Illness

Infants who are premature (i.e., less than 37 weeks gestation) and who are sick may have their specimen collection for Newborn Screening delayed to five to seven days after birth. Specimen collection should ideally occur before any blood transfusion. Premature infants will often have a high thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) level and may screen positive for congenital hypothyroidism. Premature infants who are being screened should have their gestational age at birth clearly indicated on the newborn screening specimen card.

Transfusions

Infants who are affected with one of the disorders screened for by the Newborn Screening Program may be missed if they have had a recent blood transfusion. Normal levels of newborn screening analytes may be found in these cases because of the donor blood. Ideally a specimen should be collected before transfusion or exchange transfusion. If the blood test is not performed before transfusion, the health care provider should wait 48 hours before a first screening specimen is collected.

2. Consent

The majority of Newborn Screening Programs in North America and around the world do not require the parents to sign a specific consent form. However, some hospitals may have an internal policy regarding consent. If this applies to you, we would appreciate it if a copy of your consent form, with a brief description of how the process works at your hospital, could be faxed to us at 613-738-0853.

Again, thank you for your cooperation and assistance in making the Ontario Newborn Screening Program the most effective and efficient that it can be.

Topics for future bulletins:

- o new blood spot card and requisition
- o transportation of samples

Previous bulletins (listed under 'Newsletter') and other information can be found at:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/child/screening/screen_sum.html

These bulletins are being circulated to keep you abreast of changes to the Ontario Newborn Screening program. Please share this information with any relevant personnel in your hospital / clinic. If there is someone who would like to be added to this list, contact: Tillie Chiu, Genetic Counsellor
(613) 738-3222, x1; NewbornScreening@cheo.on.ca