



Newborn Screening Bulletin 2017-1

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MISLABELED NEWBORN SCREENING SAMPLES

Newborn Screening Ontario (NSO) occasionally receives newborn screening samples where the requisition contains the demographic information of two different infants. These are considered mislabeled samples. We are sending this bulletin to clarify our process and expectations with regards to mislabeled samples.

What constitutes a mislabeled sample?

There are a number of different ways that a sample may be mislabeled. Some common types of mislabels include:

- The handwritten demographic information is for one infant, but the sticker on the requisition is for another infant.
- The information on the baby does not match the information on the mother.
- Twins have the health card numbers or lab stickers switched, or the exact same demographic information (same time of birth, birth weight, time of collection, etc.).

What is NSO's process for mislabeled samples?

When a requisition is identified as mislabeled, NSO will issue an Unsatisfactory report for both infants involved in the mislabel, along with a report addendum that details the mislabeling problem. NSO will fax the newborn screening report, report addendum, and a copy of both mislabeled requisitions to the institution/practice that submitted the samples. That institution/practice should obtain repeat newborn screening samples for both infants.

Why is a mislabeled sample Unsatisfactory?

When a sample has information from two different infants, NSO cannot confirm the identity of the infant connected to the blood sample. Thus the sample is unsatisfactory and requires a repeat.

Why does the newborn screen need to be repeated when a sample is mislabeled?

NSO requires a repeat newborn screen in order to ensure that every infant in Ontario has a newborn screen completed, and that the results of the screen are connected to the correct infant. Thus repeats are required for both infants whose information is involved in a mislabeled sample.

Please contact us at newbornscreening@cheo.on.ca if you have any questions about mislabeled samples.

Thank you for your continued involvement in ensuring every newborn in Ontario receives newborn screening.