

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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Newborn Screening Awareness

September is Newborn Screening Awareness Month

If you are a new or expectant parent, it is important to know about newborn screening and the provincial programs available for Alberta babies.

Newborn screening is the best way to find out if your baby has a condition that you, your doctor or midwife might not know about. It's possible to have one of the screened conditions even if there is no family history.

Screening helps your baby have the best start to life possible. The tests are quick and safe, and they can be done shortly after birth.

About Alberta's newborn screening programs

AHS provides these services free of charge through our two provincial programs.

- 1. Alberta's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program:** This program identifies permanent hearing loss as early as possible in a baby's life. This is one of the most common conditions found in newborns. Finding permanent hearing loss early gives your baby the best opportunity to develop language and learning skills and prevent possible developmental delays. It's best for your baby to be screened for permanent hearing loss by one month of age.
- 2. Alberta's Newborn Metabolic Screening (NMS) Program:** This program uses blood spot screening to find certain serious conditions soon after birth that can't be seen just by looking at your baby. Finding these conditions early ensures that treatment can begin sooner to prevent irreversible problems, improve health and maybe even save your baby's life.



It's best for your baby to have newborn blood spot screening between 24 and 72 hours after birth.

Where is screening offered?

You'll be offered to have your baby screened in hospital before discharge or given information on where to get screening done in the community.

Learn more at ahs.ca/newbornscreening.