

# COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER!



**#DidYouKnow** Each year, 12,500 babies with serious but treatable conditions grow up healthy thanks to newborn screening!

## SEPTEMBER IS NEWBORN SCREENING AWARENESS MONTH!

Did you know almost 3.66 million babies were born in the United States last year? Thankfully, all were required to receive screening tests before leaving the hospital. These tests were first introduced in 1963, when Dr. Robert Guthrie published a paper - *A Simple Phenylalanine Method for Detecting Phenylketonuria in Large Populations of Newborn Infants*. For the first time in history, newborns could be tested and treated before they developed symptoms.

After the benefits of the newborn screening test became well known, nearly every state in the U.S made them mandatory. Today, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have newborn screening programs. Each year, we continue to observe this holiday to help raise awareness about the importance of newborn screening and to educate new and expecting parents on what to expect from newborn screening.

### Here are 4 FACTS you need to know about Newborn Screening:

- Newborn screening helps identify serious but rare health conditions at birth.
- Most newborn screening test results are normal, but health conditions that are found early with newborn screening often can be treated.
- Test are normally taken when the baby is 1 to 2 days old.
- Early treatment is important, because it may help prevent more serious health problems for your baby.

### 3 parts to newborn screening:

- **Blood test.** Most newborn screening is done with a blood test. A health care provider pricks your baby's heel to get a few drops of blood and collects the blood on a special paper and sends it to a lab for testing.
- **Hearing screening.** This test checks for hearing loss. For this test, your provider places tiny earphones in your baby's ears and uses special computers to check how your baby responds to sound.
- **Heart screening.** This test is used to screen babies for a group of heart conditions called critical congenital heart defects (also called critical CHDs or CCHDs). It uses a simple test called pulse oximetry that checks the amount of oxygen in your baby's blood by using a pulse oximeter machine and sensors placed on your baby's skin.

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# A New Parent's Guide to Baby's 1st Doctor Visits

Hold on to the tiny moments and cherish the little things – Babies grow up so fast! Taking your baby to regular medical check-ups can help keep your baby growing and healthy!

These doctor checkups are often called well-baby visits. At well-baby visits, your baby's health care provider will check your baby's overall health. But even when things are going well, regular medical checkups are still important because they allow new parents to keep an eye on their baby's growth and development and check for serious problems.

Well-visits are also the perfect time to ask your doctor questions. If you have concerns about you or your baby's health, please make sure to ask them at the visits. But remember, if you're worried about your baby's health and think he or she needs medical care, call their health care provider right away or if it's an emergency, call 911 right away.

## When does your baby get well-baby checkups?

*Most babies get checkups at:*

2 to 5 days after birth

1 month

2 months

4 months

6 months

9 months

12 months

15 months

18 months

24 months

*Your baby may need extra visits if he gets sick or has a health condition that needs treatment or that needs to be watched closely*

## What happens at well-baby visits?

- **Charts your baby's growth.** Your healthcare provider will weigh your baby, measure their length and the size of their head. This information is then charted so you can see how much your baby is growing between visits and how your baby's growth compares to other babies at the same age.
- **Gives your baby a physical exam.** During your baby physical exam, the doctor will check your baby from head to toe to make sure he/she is healthy. If there are problems, the doctor may give your baby tests, treatments or they refer them to a health care provider who specializes in treating babies with certain medical conditions.
- **Checks your baby's development.** Your baby's provider checks to make sure your baby is meeting developmental milestones (scan the code on Page 3 to see a *Developmental checklist for Healthy Babies*). These are skills and activities that most children can do at a certain age, like rolling over, picking things up, and eventually walking and talking.
- **Talks to you about your baby's nutrition.** Your baby's provider talks to you about what, how much and how often you feed your baby. CAHSC strongly recommends breastfeeding for the first year because of the countless benefits for mom and baby. However, as your baby grows, talk to the provider about when to start solid foods and what foods are best for your baby to eat.
- **Gives your baby vaccinations.** A vaccination is a shot that contains a vaccine that helps protect your baby against certain diseases. A vaccine is medicine that makes your baby immune to certain diseases. If your baby is immune to a disease, he can't get that disease.
- **Talks to you about general baby care.** You and your baby's provider can talk about what to expect as your baby grows. Ask any questions you have—write them down so you don't forget them.

## When should you call your baby's health care provider?

- You think your baby needs medical care but not emergency care.
- You're worried about your baby because she doesn't look or act well, especially if she was born prematurely, spent time in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU) after birth or has health problems.
- Eats less than usual or has other changes in appetite
- Cries regularly or is really fussy and can't be comforted; is less active than usual or has changes in behavior.
- Often has diarrhea or stools that are loose or watery; is constipated and has fewer-than-usual stools for a few days; or has blood in the urine or bloody diarrhea
- Has vomiting (more than just spit up) that lasts for more than a few hours
- Has a fever and seems more than mildly ill; or has a fever with vomiting, a rash or a cough or cold that doesn't improve or gets worse
- Has ear pain or fluid draining from the ears; or has red eyes or mucus coming from the eyes
- Has a tender navel or penis, especially with redness, bleeding or oozing fluid in these areas
- When in doubt, trust your instincts! If you're worried about your baby, call their doctor.

## Call Emergency Services (911) right away if your baby:

- Has trouble breathing or his skin or lips look blue, purple or gray
- Has a seizure
- Is hard to wake up or is not responding normally or is limp and not able to move.
- If your baby is less than 2 months old and has a rectal temperature above 100.4F.
- Has a head injury and is unconscious, acting strangely, vomiting or has unusual skin color.
- Has bleeding that doesn't stop or has blood in his vomit or in his stool (poop).
- Has yellowish skin or eyes.
- Has signs of dehydration. (Signs include fewer than six to eight wet diapers in 24 hours; sunken eyes; a sunken soft spot (called the fontanel or fontanelle) on the top of the head; or no tears when crying.



## 8 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR PEDIATRICIAN AT THE WELL-BABY CHECKUPS

Well-Baby Visits are an important part of keeping your baby healthy! They are your chance to get advice and reassurance, so don't try to manage a wriggly newborn while trying to remember all the questions you wanted to ask the pediatrician. Keep a running list of non-urgent questions and concerns and write down your questions. Here are just a few important questions you could ask at your baby's first doctor visits.

### 1. Are my child's growth and weight healthy?

At each visit, your doctor will do basic measurements of your child, including height and weight (and head circumference for babies and toddlers).

### 2. Is my child on schedule for his/her vaccinations?

At the end of the visit, your child will receive any needed vaccinations. These shots are critical for protecting your child from a host of serious diseases, including whooping cough, polio, measles and more.

### 3. What should my baby eat (and not eat)?

Nutrition is important for your baby's growth and development. Talk to the doctor about your child's diet. For babies and toddlers, you might have questions around breastfeeding, when to introduce solid foods and what to do if you have any breastfeeding problems or concerns.

### 4. How can I keep my child safe?

For babies and toddlers, safety questions can cover car seats, child-proofing your home, sun exposure and more.

### 5. Which milestones should my child reach next?

Your doctor will want to know if your baby is reaching the common milestones for his or her age group. In the early years, these include rolling over, grabbing and talking. In addition, ask which milestones your child should reach by the next appointment.

### 6. Is it normal that my child ... ?

This can be anything you're concerned about—from a recurring rash or a strange bump to weight gain, picky eating or runny noses. Whatever the issue is ask. If a question comes up after your appointment, call and ask.

### 7. When is my next appointment?

Before you head home, don't forget to book your next well-child visit. It's easy to start falling behind if you don't schedule your next visit. Remember, you can always change the date later if you need to. Making the appointment while you're still at the office is the best way to ensure you and your baby will stay on track.

**PRO TIP:** Your baby's doctor may ask how you and your family are caring for your baby and how you are feeling. **TELL THE TRUTH** - It's OK to tell your baby's provider how you feel. So please don't be afraid to tell your baby's doctor if you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed, especially if you have signs or symptoms of postpartum depression. Postpartum Depression is a serious medical condition that is very common, but treatable among new parents.



**For Well-Baby Tips & Information Please Scan the QR Code or Visit Our Website at [www.CapitalAreaHealthyStart.org/healthy-baby-resources/](http://www.CapitalAreaHealthyStart.org/healthy-baby-resources/)**





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## Upcoming Events

Every ticket purchased using our promo code goes towards our mission to improve the health of infants and their families in our local communities! Visit [www.tuckerciviccenter.com](http://www.tuckerciviccenter.com) & use our promo code to get your tickets!



## What is CONNECT?

Capital Area Healthy Start is dedicated to connecting new or expecting moms and families with community programs to help them during every parenthood stage. Our Connect program, also known as CI&R, assists pregnant women, caregivers, and families with young children by providing a one-stop entry point for needed services, such as healthy pregnancy education, child development education,



But please remember, don't drink alcohol if you are pregnant trying to get pregnant or think you may be pregnant because drinking alcohol during pregnancy makes your baby more likely to have premature birth, birth defects and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

breastfeeding education, women's health education, and care coordination. Connect works to identify a family's needs and link them with local programs that can best serve them, creating a referral process that not only streamlines access to services but works to build a larger network of care during early childhood.



Please click [HERE](http://www.capitalareahealthystart.org/connect-program/) to learn more or visit our website at [www.capitalareahealthystart.org/connect-program/](http://www.capitalareahealthystart.org/connect-program/)