



State of CT Genetics Newborn Screening Program Family Fact Sheet

CONGENITAL HYPOTHYROIDISM (CH)

Hormones are an important part of our body. Babies with the disorder called congenital hypothyroidism (CH) have a thyroid that inadequately produces thyroid hormone. Thyroid hormone is important for the body to function and develop. If CH is not treated, the low levels of thyroid hormone can cause mental retardation and physical symptoms such as jaundice, constipation, lethargy, and growth failure.

Connecticut began screening for CH in 1976. In Connecticut, about 1 in every 4,070 newborn babies has CH.

How does a baby get CH?

CH is usually not an inherited disease, however, a small number of CH cases are due to inherited disorders, in the ability to produce thyroid hormone.

How is a baby tested for CH?

Prior to discharge from the facility of birth, a small sample of blood is taken from the baby's heel. The sample is then sent to the State laboratory to screen for CH. Abnormal screening results are reported to the Department of Public Health, Genetic Newborn Screening Tracking Unit nurse consultant. If the results are borderline, the DPH nurse consultant will notify the baby's primary care provider of the need to obtain a second specimen. If the results are presumed positive, the DPH nurse consultant will notify the baby's primary care provider of the need for a prompt referral to one of the Endocrine Regional Treatment Centers at Yale or Connecticut Children's Medical Center for confirmation testing and follow-up treatment if necessary.

What is the treatment for CH?

If a diagnosis is confirmed, the Regional Treatment Center specialists will prescribe treatment for CH, which includes supplements of the missing hormone. Early diagnosis of CH leads to early treatment, which is important for normal mental and physical growth and development of your baby.

WARNING: If your baby is on thyroid hormone, do not feed your baby soy formula.



Keeping Connecticut Healthy

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