

*North Carolina Women's Hospital*

## **Tests for Your Newborn Baby**

The staff of UNC Healthcare is excited that you will be having your baby at the North Carolina Women's Hospital. Most babies are born healthy and normal. In order to give your baby the healthiest possible start, your baby will be tested while in the hospital nursery for some rare problems.

### **What tests will my baby have?**

Your baby will have a blood test and a hearing test. State law says that the hospital has to do the tests unless you do not want them done.

### **Why are the tests done?**

The tests are done to check for treatable problems that you cannot see by looking at your baby. The blood test will check for metabolic disorders that would cause problems later in life. The hearing test will check your baby for hearing problems.

### **What disorders is the blood test testing for?**

The blood test is for over 37 different disorders like PKU and sickle cell. These disorders show up after birth and can cause many problems if they are not found.

### **How are the tests done?**

The blood test is done after your baby is 24 hours old. A few drops of blood will be taken from your baby's heel. This only takes a few minutes. If you leave the hospital before your baby is 24 hours old, you should have your baby's healthcare provider do the test before your baby is one week old.

The hearing test will be done when your baby is sleeping. The test can take 15 - 45 minutes. It does not hurt your baby. Small sticky pads are put on your baby's head, ears, and shoulder, and a machine does the test. You will know the results of the test after it is done. If a hearing problem is detected, the state will help you.

### **Must my baby have these tests?**

You, as a parent, have a right to say no to the tests. You can say no for the blood test or the hearing test. Both of these tests are very important for your baby. If you do not want one or both of these tests done, please tell your provider that you do not want them. You will be asked to sign a form saying that you do not want the tests done. The hospital reports all information to the state.

### **How will I know the results?**

The results will be forwarded to the health care provider you choose before you leave the hospital. Remember to ask your baby's health care provider for the results.

*Approved by NC Women's hospital Patient Education Steering Committee, November 18, 2002*

