



Screening for Phenylketonuria

Population	All Newborns
Recommendation	Screen Grade: A

Screening Tests	<p>Screening for PKU is mandated in all 50 states. Methods of screening vary.</p> <p>Three main methods are used to screen for PKU in the United States:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Guthrie Bacterial Inhibition Assay (BIA) 2) Automated fluorometric assay 3) Tandem mass spectrometry
Timing of Screening	<p>Infants who are tested within the first 24 hours after birth should receive a repeat screening test by 2 weeks of age.</p> <p>Optimal timing of screening for premature infants and infants with illnesses is at or near 7 days of age, but in all cases before discharge from the newborn nursery.</p>
Treatment	<p>It is essential that phenylalanine restrictions be instituted shortly after birth to prevent the neurodevelopmental effects of PKU.</p>
Other Relevant Recommendations from the USPSTF	<p>Additional USPSTF recommendations regarding screening tests for newborns can be accessed at http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/cps3dix.htm#pediatric</p>

For the full [recommendation statement](#) and [supporting documents](#) please go to <http://www.preventiveservices.ahrq.gov>.