

Voice Response System

What is the Voice Response System (VRS)?

The purpose of the Voice Response System (VRS) is to provide 24-hour access to newborn screening laboratory information on all patients screened at the Texas Department of Health (TDH) Laboratory.

What are the requirements to use the VRS?

- To use the VRS you must have a
- Licensed Texas Newborn Screening number; and
 - Personal identification number (PIN)

How do I meet these requirements?

If you are presently a TDH Submitter, you were assigned a Texas Newborn Screening (NBS) Number. If you plan to become a TDH Laboratory Submitter, i.e., you will be collecting newborn screening blood specimens, you should call the TDH Laboratory at 512/458-7111 extension 2421 and request a Texas Newborn Screening number.

To request the Personal identification number (PIN), call 512/458-7111 extension 7319. A written confirmation with your PIN will be forwarded to you.

What else do I need?

When you are ready to access the VRS, you will need the NBS number and PIN along with:

- Newborn Screening form serial number or social security number of infant's mother (TIP: Retain the yellow copy of the blood collection form)
- Touch tone phone

How do I use the VRS?

Call 512/458-7300. Instructions for use of the system are presented in logical order during the call. Interaction with the system is by means of the telephone keypad. Keys are identified as follows:
 number..... 1-9 and 0
 pound.....#
 star*

What information will I receive?

Form serial number (from specimen form)
 Last name (spelled)
 Sex (male, female, unknown)
 Date of birth
 Test results
 Interpretation
 A message may be repeated at any time by pressing the pound (#) key.

May I speak with the Newborn Screening staff?


After hearing results for an infant, you will be given the opportunity to speak with a member of the Newborn Screening staff. Then, or at any time thereafter, during normal business hours (8:00 – 5:00), you may press the star (*) key to have your call transferred to a staff member.

May I receive a hard copy of the screen?

Yes. An add-on feature to the VRS allows results to be sent via FAX to a physician requiring a hard copy of the voice session.

How current is the VRS?

Every evening all Newborn Screening data entries made that day are automatically sent to the VRS.



The number to access the VRS is:

512/458-7300





SUMMER HEAT

Did you know that the hot weather during our Texas summers could damage newborn screening specimens? Exposure to heat can affect the specimens two ways: (a) the blood may “bake” onto the filter paper making it difficult to dissolve blood off the filter paper for testing and (b) the heat may cause degradation of substances in the blood, such as thyroxine and galactose, and adversely affect test values. Specimens that have been affected by heat are not acceptable for testing and are reported “unsatisfactory-incomplete elution,” referring to loss of the ability to dissolve blood off the filter paper. When heat exposure occurs during mail transport, there is little that a submitter can do to prevent the situation. However, if your facility has had specimen rejections for incomplete elution, you should review your own specimen handling practices to be certain that specimens are not being exposed to a hot environment prior to mailing. Newborn screening specimens should never be left in a hot car before delivering to a post office. Specimens should not be placed in direct sunlight near a hot window. Also, avoid placing these specimens in an outdoor metal mailbox ahead of the scheduled mail pick up time. By eliminating risks for heat exposure, you may be able to prevent specimen rejections and avoid the need for a re-collection.



NBS MAILING LIST

If you are not the appropriate person to receive this newsletter or if you would like additional copies to be distributed to a different site, please call
1-800-422-2956
extension **3204**.

TIPS for a timelier turn-around of NBS specimens

- Don't “batch” specimens (waiting for 4 or 5 specimens to mail at the same time).
- Plan ahead for holidays and weekends. If the holiday falls on Thursday or Friday, and the specimen is not mailed until Monday, there will be a 3 – 4 day delay in receiving the results.
- Fill out demographic information completely and legibly.
- If known, use the TDH laboratory number on subsequent specimens.
- If possible, mail the specimen from the post office rather than a neighborhood mailbox.
- Designate a responsible party to mail specimens, and to receive and record results.
- Keep a log of the form number or keep the yellow copy from all submitted specimens. This will expedite locating specimen results.
- The Newborn Screening Test is not run “stat”. Please contact TDH if results from a particular test are needed immediately.
- If local testing is done for a disorder, please contact TDH. **The Newborn Screening Test will still need to be done for the other disorders.**
- Follow the recommended collection procedure carefully to ensure an acceptable specimen.

Texas Department of Health Newborn Screening Program

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