

Tips for Pulse Oximetry Screeners



Where do I place the sensor?



EITHER FOOT:

Wrap the sensor around the outer aspect of either foot. Place the light emitter on the top of the foot with the photodetector directly opposite of it. The tape/wrap should be securely wrapped around the foot.



RIGHT HAND:

Wrap the sensor around the outer aspect of the right hand. Place the light emitter on the top of the right hand with the photodetector directly opposite of it. The tape/wrap should be securely wrapped around the hand.

What do I say to the family?

SCREEN:

We are going to screen your baby for critical congenital heart disease using a fast and painless test called pulse oximetry. The test will only take a few minutes, and it checks the oxygen level in your baby's blood.

REPEAT SCREEN:

Your baby's oxygen level was lower than we'd like when we performed the pulse oximetry screen, so we will recheck it again in about an hour.

DID NOT PASS:

Your baby's oxygen level was low when we performed the pulse oximetry screen. Your baby's care team needs to follow-up right away to find out why the oxygen level was low. Sometimes a low oxygen level is a sign of health problems. If there is a problem, it is best to figure it out before your baby goes home.

PASS:

Your baby had a normal oxygen level when we performed the pulse oximetry screen. No further testing is needed at this time. Since screening does not detect all heart defects, it is important for you to know what symptoms to look for in the future. Watch your baby's **H.E.A.R.T.**: **H**eat rate (too fast or too slow?); **E**nergy (overly sleepy or fussy?); **A**ppearance (pale or blue skin?); **R**espiration (breathing too fast or too slow?); **T**emperature (cold to the touch?).