

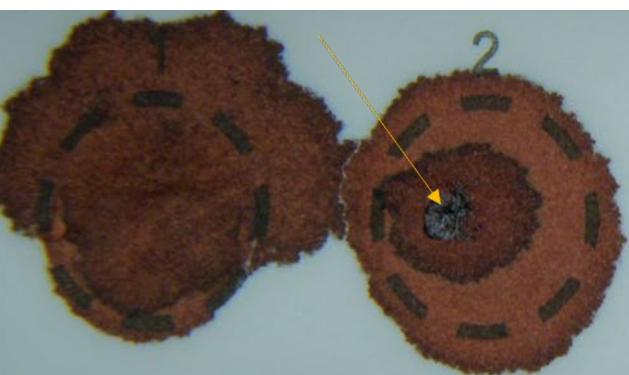
SPOTfocus

Newborn Screening Quality Improvement Hints

BLOOD WAS CAKED, CLOTTED, OR LAYERED ONTO THE FILTER PAPER

The supplied newborn screening filter paper can hold a specific amount of blood. Caked, clotted, or layered blood specimens have too much blood. Specimens with too much blood can cause inaccurate results. These specimens will be unsatisfactory for testing.

Example of Clotting



Example of Layering



In 2023, the DSHS Laboratory was unable to test 2,102 NBS specimens due to caked, clotted, or layered blood. All specimens required recollection. This caused stress to families and created extra costs for submitters.

TIPS TO AVOID CAKED, CLOTTED, OR LAYERED SPECIMENS

- Select a heel lancet of appropriate size (< 2.0 mm in length).
- Warm the heel.
- Wipe away the first drop of blood.
- Allow a large drop of blood to form.
- Gently touch the center of a preprinted circle on the filter paper with the large drop of blood. Avoid contact between the puncture site and the filter paper.
- Apply blood to only one side of the filter paper and completely fill one circle at a time.
- Check to make sure that blood applied to the preprinted circle has soaked through to the other side.
- If, after blood application, the preprinted circle is not full, do not apply more blood to it. This often causes the blood to cake, clot, or layer. Continue to the next circle.
- If blood flow diminishes, repeat the specimen collection procedure using a new lancet.



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

DSHS Newborn Screening Laboratory
NewbornScreeningLab@dshs.texas.gov
1-888-963-7111 ext. 7333