How to Collect an Acceptable Neonatal Metabolic Screening Specimen

Equipment:

- Sterile lancet with tip approximately 2 mm, or an automated lancet device
- Sterile alcohol prep
- Sterile gauze pad
- Screening collection form
- Gloves

The specimen collection forms should be stored in a cool dry place. Do not do anything that could compress the filter paper portion of the collection form, nor allow any contaminant, including skin oil to come in contact with the filter paper.

Obtaining the Specimen:

1. Warm the infant's foot with a soft moist cloth/towel, or approved warming device, for about 3 minutes.

2. Disinfect and wipe the skin dry.

3. Puncture the heel, (see back of top ply of collection form for proper location) and wipe away the first drop of blood.

4. Allow subsequent drops of blood to form freely. Lightly touch the filter paper to a large drop of blood, allowing the blood to soak through and completely fill the circle. Repeat until all the circles are filled. **Do not** apply more than one drop of blood to a circle. If the blood flow begins to diminish before the circles are filled, repeat steps 1 through 4.

5. Allow the blood specimen to air dry thoroughly (3-4 hours) on a level, non-absorbent surface. Insufficient drying can adversely affect the test results. Hair dryers or other sources of heat should not be used to dry the specimens.

6. Mail the completed form **within 24 hours of collection**, by first class mail, overnight delivery or other appropriate means, to the Iowa Neonatal Metabolic Screening Program laboratory. **Facilities are encouraged to use overnight delivery.**

   Address for overnight delivery:
   INMSP
   University Hygienic Laboratory
   1521 2nd St.
   Des Moines, Iowa 50314

7. **Mail specimens daily**. **Do not batch specimens.**