



UK NSC on newborn screening for Severe Combined Immune Deficiency (SCID)

Following a review of the evidence against strict criteria, the UK NSC will consult publicly on the proposal for an evaluation of SCID.

Severe Combined Immune Deficiency (SCID) refers to some rare inherited conditions. These affect the development of the baby's immune system. SCID makes it more difficult for babies to fight off infections from about 3 months of age. Infections that are not serious in most babies can be life threatening in those with SCID. The damaged immune system can be repaired with a stem cell transplant.

Newborn screening would look for babies with low numbers of white blood cells. Early detection by newborn screening can improve the success of the stem cell transplants. This is because doctors can help the baby to avoid infections before the transplant if they know the baby has SCID.

Key findings supporting the UK NSC recommendation

The UK NSC found that screening for this purpose is likely to be effective at a reasonable cost. But the evidence in some areas is uncertain. For example:

- the number of healthy babies found to have low numbers of white cells (that is, a 'false positive' result) is not known
- what care and treatment is best for babies who are found to have low numbers of white cells for reasons other than SCID
- what proportion of babies are found by screening rather than as siblings

The UK NSC is recommending that screening for SCID should be tried in a practical evaluation in the NHS. This will help the Committee decide whether screening for SCID should be part of the newborn blood spot screening programme.

The UK NSC regularly reviews its recommendations on screening for different conditions in the light of new research evidence becoming available.

To find out more about the UK NSC's SCID recommendation, please visit:

legacyscreening.phe.org.uk/scid

The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) advises ministers and the NHS in the 4 UK countries about all aspects of screening and supports implementation of screening programmes.

Find out more about the UK National Screening Committee at www.gov.uk/uknsc. The UK NSC evidence review process is described at www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-nsc-evidence-review-process and a list of all UK NSC recommendations can be found at legacy.screening.nhs.uk/recommendations

The UK NSC secretariat is hosted by Public Health England (www.gov.uk/phe).