June 6, 2012

Parents Should be Told

Some very worried mothers have posted on baby-centered websites. Clinics have called to say their baby’s newborn screening is abnormal. A nurse told one mom it could just be a false-positive, in other words, perfectly fine. But she wrote, “I can’t stop crying thinking that something is wrong with my baby.”

Newborn screening is a government program, yet most parents are not told about the risks of inaccurate test results. As newborns are tested for an expanding list of conditions, the number of false-positives is increasing. Researchers say the fear generated by the unexpected clinic phone call can impact the parent-child relationship for years even if the child retests normal. Parents should be told.

“Newborn screening result was abnormal,” Jessie1207, BabyCenter, May 30, 2012.