

You have learned that your child has an unidentified hemoglobin trait.

This brochure will answer some of your questions and concerns. After you read it and discuss it with your babies doctor you can call the number below if you still have questions.

Is my baby sick? No

Unidentified hemoglobin trait is not an illness or disease. It will not make your baby sick. Hemoglobin type, like eye color and hair color, is passed down from parent to child.

What is hemoglobin?

Hemoglobin is inside red blood cells and carries oxygen to all parts of the body. There are many different types of hemoglobin.

The most common type of hemoglobin is hemoglobin A. It is also called normal or adult hemoglobin (Hemoglobin A). Babies are born with fetal hemoglobin (Hemoglobin F). Your baby has hemoglobin A and F and a hemoglobin variant. Most types of hemoglobin variants do not cause any problems.

Why can't my baby's hemoglobin type be identified?

There are many hemoglobin variants or unidentified hemoglobins. The reason it is called unidentified is that with the newborn screening tests we can see the variant is there but we can not determine which one it is. This occurs when the baby gets one gene that makes normal hemoglobin and one gene that makes abnormal hemoglobin or variant hemoglobin. Abnormal hemoglobin types, sometimes called variants, can affect how the hemoglobin functions in the body. Your genes determine the type of hemoglobin you have.

What exactly is a gene?

Genes are tiny bits of information. They form the blueprint for new life. Genes come in pairs. You get half of your genes from your father and half of your genes from your mother.

How did my baby get an unidentified hemoglobin trait?

A variant, or abnormal, hemoglobin type occurs when a baby gets one normal hemoglobin from one parent, and one variant (abnormal) hemoglobin from the other parent.

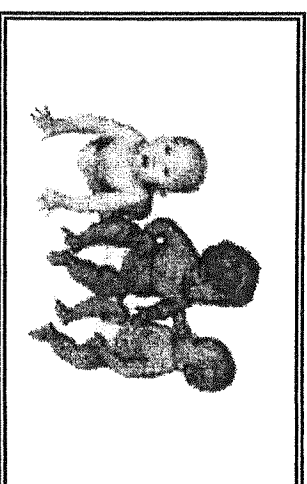
Why is it called a trait?

When a person gets one normal gene from one parent and one abnormal gene from another it

is called a trait. If both genes are abnormal then it is called a disease.

Can unidentified hemoglobin trait ever turn into a disease? No

Your baby's hemoglobin gene will not change. It remains the same for life.



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