

Guideline for Capillary Blood Sampling of Neonates at Home

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Approved by:	Neonatal Guidelines Review Meeting	
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Key Amendments

Date	Amendments	Approved by
November 2022	Document approved for 3 years with no amendments	Dr Gregory/ Neonatal Guidelines Review Meeting
10 th November 2025	Document extended for 6 months to allow time for review and update	Susan Smith

Introduction

This pathway is to be used in conjunction with the Paediatrics Nursing pathway WAHT-TP-083 and is for use with preterm babies <4 months post term, at home under the care of neonatal outreach.

Indications

To obtain blood samples from the heel as requested by clinician.

For baby's who have been discharged home from NNU/TCU.

Heel sampling to be used on babies <4 months corrected gestation.

Details of Guideline**Equipment**

- Appropriate sized lancet (refer to Appendix 1 of WHAT-TP-083 'choosing the right blood letting device')
- Sterile cotton wool
- Sampling bottles and patient sticker
- Non sterile gloves
- Clean flat surface (wipe with disinfectant wipes)

Procedure

1. Check patient identification and sample required.

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2. Explain to the parents/carers reason for blood sample, procedure and obtain verbal consent. They may want to leave the room.
3. If possible wash hands or apply alcohol gel and prepare all equipment on a clean flat surface.
4. Administer sucrose as per Pharmacological Pain Relief Guideline (WHAT-NEO-025).
5. Swaddle baby if you are alone or ask parents to hold baby.
6. With clean hands put on gloves.
7. Select site for sample (medial or lateral portion of the heel).
8. Use non-dominant hand to hold the limb.
9. Break the skin with suitable bloodletting device.
10. Use a massaging 'squeeze and release' technique around the puncture site to recover the drops of blood.
11. Collect the appropriate free flowing specimen.
12. Once sufficient blood is obtained wipe the puncture site and apply pressure until the bleeding stops.
13. Allow parents to comfort baby if necessary.
14. Dispose of sharps in portable sharps bin and clinical waste in waste bag (ask parents to dispose of this in household waste).
15. Label bottles immediately with patient details.
16. Place in secure container, out of daylight, until return to Worcestershire Royal Hospital.
17. Record in Neonatal Outreach notes the samples taken.
18. Upon return, place samples in plastic sleeve with specimen form and seal.
19. Despatch to pathology department.
20. During Neonatal Outreach working hours bloods will be chased by the team, otherwise inform and arrange with neonatal on-call doctor to chase results.