

Galactosemia, Classic (GALT)

(Sounds like GAH-LAC-TOE-SEE-ME-AH, CLAS-SIC)



What is newborn blood spot screening?

This is a blood test, from a heel poke, that is done a day or 2 after babies are born to test for treatable conditions including classic galactosemia (GALT) that you, your doctor, or midwife can't see by just looking at your baby. This screening test is different from those done during pregnancy.



What does it mean if my baby needs more tests for GALT?

A baby needs to have more testing for GALT when their screening test result is abnormal or positive. This doesn't mean your baby has GALT. It means your baby has a higher chance of having the condition and will need more tests to find out if they have GALT or not.

It's normal to feel worried if your baby needs more testing. Your specialists and other healthcare providers are there to support you. They'll explain what will happen and answer your questions.

What is GALT?

GALT is a metabolic condition that affects how your body uses certain foods you eat to make energy. This includes breastmilk and regular formula. With GALT, your body can't use a sugar called galactose. Galactose then builds up in your body and can cause serious health problems.

What are some early signs of GALT?

Your baby may:

- find it hard to feed well and gain weight
- vomit (more than usual spit-up after feeding)
- have jaundice (skin looks yellow)

What causes GALT?

GALT is genetic. This means babies with GALT are born with a gene from both parents, which has a change in it. This change stops the gene from working properly. GALT isn't caused by anything that happened during pregnancy.

There may be no signs of GALT at birth. It's important to remember that this condition can't be seen by looking at your baby.



What can I expect with more testing?

Everything that will happen with more testing will be explained to you. Your baby may need to have their blood and urine tested to check for GALT.

This testing may be done at a clinic in Edmonton or Calgary that specializes in GALT.

What if more testing shows my baby has GALT?

If testing shows that your baby has GALT a specialized healthcare team will work with you to make a care plan for your baby. You and your baby will get the best care and support possible.

How is GALT treated?

Babies with GALT need to avoid foods with galactose and drink a special formula. To make sure babies get enough nutrients, they may need to take vitamin supplements. The specialized healthcare team will give you detailed instructions about how to manage your baby's health.

