

NICU genetic testing

Frequently Asked Questions

UnitedHealthcare understands that genetic testing can give providers and our members a more comprehensive look at their health. Having this information for Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) patients is especially important, as up to 30%¹ of babies in the NICU setting have an underlying genetic condition. Receiving a genetic diagnosis while in the NICU may aid the medical team with additional information to further create a personalized care plan, which may include targeted therapies, procedures or redirection of care. For more questions on NICU genetic testing, please contact United_Genetics@uhc.com.

Frequently asked questions

Who is eligible for the program?

Beginning July 1, 2021, United Healthcare members in the NICU on commercial policies who were born at 32 weeks gestation or above where a genetic condition is suspected by the provider are eligible for select rapid test. Please refer to the clinical indicator document for suggestions on when an underlying genetic condition may be suspected.

What if I want to use a test or laboratory that is not part of this program?

At this time, a provider or facility would follow their current testing and billing guidelines.

Will this program expand to include other laboratories and/or tests?

Laboratories and testing options appropriate for achieving a rapid genetic diagnosis in the NICU setting will continue to be evaluated and updated as needed.

How does this impact our facility's current inpatient contract with UnitedHealthcare?

There is no impact to a facility's current contract. The NICU Genetic Testing program is a new program, effective July 1, 2021, where tests pre-selected for inclusion in the program may be submitted directly to the approved laboratory for reimbursement. When a program approved test is utilized with the code UHC NICU, the laboratory will know to seek reimbursement from UnitedHealthcare directly and not the hospital.

Is a hospital required to participate in the program?

No. Health care professionals in the inpatient setting may continue to utilize their current process for ordering genetic testing through their laboratory of choice, or they may choose to utilize one of the program's participating laboratory tests.

Does a facility utilizing an approved NICU test seek reimbursement from UnitedHealthcare?

No. When a facility is utilizing a test approved for inclusion in the program, it should send the test to the appropriate laboratory, including the code UHC NICU. The facility should not seek reimbursement from UnitedHealthcare for the test, as reimbursement will be managed with the participating laboratories directly.

What genetic tests are included in the NICU Genetic Testing program?

Test options will continue to be evaluated and updated. At this time, rapid whole exome sequencing (rWES), available through XomeDxXpress®, analyzes the exome, which is the part of the genome that is thought to include most mutations that impact health.

• Laboratory Support

GeneDx has professionals, including genetic counselors, geneticists and clinicians, available to answer questions at no cost. For assistance, please contact GeneDx at Xpress@genedx.com, 888-729-1206.

• Genetic Counseling Services

InformedDNA, an in-network virtual genetic counseling practice, is available to provide pre-test and/or post-test genetic counseling and informed consent for genetic testing to the parents of your patients via telephone. To refer a patient, go to informeddna.com or call 800-975-4819. InformedDNA is in-network with most UnitedHealthcare commercials plans.

	XomeDxXpress®
Test Type	Rapid whole exome sequencing (rWES), including up to 20,000 genes
Diagnostic Yield (rate)	Up to 26% for singletons; 38-58% for trios
Incidental or Secondary Findings	Yes, available with appropriate consent
Turnaround Time (TAT)	7 days for verbal report; 14 days for written, final report
Sample Type(s)	NICU Patient: ≥1mL blood in lavender top Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) tube preferred Parents: ≥1mL blood in EDTA tube or 2 buccal swabs/person
Trios Required	No, but strongly recommended to increase diagnostic yield and to reduce the number of variants of uncertain significance (VUS)
Contact Information	Xpress@genedx.com 888-729-1206

Next Steps:

1. If you are unsure if a rapid exome is appropriate for your patient, please contact GeneDx or consider genetic counseling services
2. When ordering an approved program test, include the code UHC NICU on the lab order form. The facility should not seek reimbursement from United Healthcare for the test, as reimbursement will be managed with the participating laboratories directly.
3. If you do not have on-site access to genetic specialists, InformedDNA's (800-975-4819) board-certified genetic counselors, working in conjunction with board-certified medical and molecular physician geneticists, are available to provide pre-test and/or post-test genetic counseling via phone. They communicate directly with you like any other specialty consultant and bill your patient's insurance plan.



Insurance coverage provided by or through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or its affiliates. Health plan coverage provided by UnitedHealthcare of Arizona, Inc., UHC of California DBA UnitedHealthcare of California, UnitedHealthcare Benefits Plan of California, UnitedHealthcare of Colorado, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of the Mid-Atlantic, Inc., MAMSI Life and Health Insurance Company, UnitedHealthcare of New York, Inc., UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company of New York, UnitedHealthcare of Oklahoma, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Oregon, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Pennsylvania, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Texas, Inc., UnitedHealthcare Benefits of Texas, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Utah, Inc., UnitedHealthcare of Washington, Inc., Optimum Choice, Inc., Oxford Health Insurance, Inc., Oxford Health Plans (NJ), Inc., Oxford Health Plans (CT), Inc., All Savers Insurance Company, or other affiliates. Administrative services provided by OptumHealth Care Solutions, LLC, OptumRx, Oxford Health Plans LLC, United HealthCare Services, Inc., or other affiliates. Behavioral health products provided by U.S. Behavioral Health Plan, California (USBHPC), or its affiliates.

PCA-1-21-02068-VC-FAQ_06302021

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