Newborn screening blood spots – small drops of a baby's blood -- are vital to quality screening. They are used to:

- Do repeat screening test if needed
- Develop new screening tests, e.g., SCID
- Ensure that testing equipment works properly
- Improve existing newborn screening tests
- Check accuracy of positive screening results
- Check screening quality by comparing test results from stored cards with those from cards sent by CDC.

NBS spots are valuable for:

- Making a diagnosis after unexplained death of an infant.
- In research studies of childhood diseases; environmental exposures among pregnant women; exposure of pregnant women to infectious agents, e.g., hepatitis B, toxoplasmosis, rubella; PCB hazards for children in Love Canal

Newborn screening blood spots are vital to quality screening. They protect babies' lives by ensuring accurate and reliable test results.

Some ways states safeguard NBS spots and data:

- De-identify prior to storage
- House in locked, secure facilities
- Allow access by few authorized staff
- Destroy cards at end of retention period.
- Provide IRB oversight where research is allowed
- Some states require parental consent for use of baby's blood spots in research

Can my baby be identified through the DNA in a newborn screening blood spot alone?

- DNA is in all living organisms and all parts of our bodies: e.g., hair, finger nails, skin, blood.
- A baby cannot be identified through the DNA in a blood spot alone. A second sample is necessary for comparison. Regulations governing research forbid such comparisons.