

# Weekend BILIRUBIN CLINIC Provides PEACE OF MIND

**N**ewborn babies often experience a yellow discoloration in their skin and eyes during their first days of life. This infant jaundice happens when the baby's blood contains too much bilirubin — a yellow-colored pigment of red blood cells. It often occurs because a baby's liver isn't mature enough to remove bilirubin from the bloodstream.

In most instances, infant jaundice is mild and doesn't require treatment. But it's important to monitor the bilirubin levels of all newborns. If the level gets too high and isn't properly treated, it could cause brain damage. Severe jaundice can also be an indicator of an underlying disease.

All babies are examined for jaundice at Swedish Medical Center before they are sent home. Bilirubin levels are usually highest when your baby is 3 to 5 days old; therefore, it is important that your baby be seen by his or her pediatrician within two days of discharge from the hospital to further assess for symptoms of jaundice.

## CONVENIENT NEW CLINIC

Recognizing these bilirubin checks can be difficult for both providers and parents to schedule during the weekends and holidays when most physician offices are closed, Swedish Medical Center recently launched a **Weekend/Holiday Bili Clinic** to provide a convenient option for affordable, safe and reliable testing.

Our specially trained laboratory personnel use a device called a bilimeter to measure the bilirubin levels of newborns. The bilimeter works by sending a quick flash of light through the skin to measure the serum bilirubin level. It's pain-free, noninvasive and provides instant results. Our lab personnel will reach out to the referring doctor immediately with the reading to determine if any additional testing or follow-up care is necessary.

## JAUNDICE TREATMENT OPTIONS

Some babies may require a technique called phototherapy to treat jaundice. Phototherapy is the use of special high-power lights, or bili-lights, to speed up the removal of bilirubin. A "bili-bed" may also be used in the treatment of jaundice. Your baby will need to wear special eye shields while under phototherapy to protect his or her eyes.

Talk with your doctor or nurse immediately if your baby:

- Has fewer than four wet or dirty diapers in 24 hours
- Is very sleepy and hard to wake for feedings
- Has trouble nursing or sucking from a bottle
- Cannot be comforted or has a shrill and high-pitched cry
- Appears limp or floppy
- Displays yellowing in the whites of his or her eyes

## WEEKEND/HOLIDAY BILI CLINIC

**WHERE:** Swedish Medical  
Center Laboratory

**WHEN:** Weekends and  
major holidays

**HOURS:** 10 a.m. – noon

**COST:** \$10

To learn more, please call Swedish  
Medical Center's Family Care Unit  
at **303-788-2620**.

