



Procedure: WIC Blood Work Requirements

Functional Area: VIII Certification, Eligibility & Coordination of Services

Section: B 1 e i

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Purpose

To explain the requirements for hematological test for anemia as part of eligibility.

Hemoglobin Screening

WIC requires that each applicant be screened for risk of a medical condition known as iron deficiency anemia. A Hemoglobin test is considered a “quick screening tool” for iron deficiency anemia. The test measures the amount of hemoglobin in the red blood cells. The hemoglobin screening is not used to diagnose iron deficiency anemia.

Anemia Cutoffs

Nebraska uses the 1998 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines for anemia cutoffs. These cutoffs are also recommended by the Institute of Medicine as an acceptable reference. The cut-off values for anemia vary with altitude, age, sex, smoking status and stage of pregnancy.

Requirement for Certification

Federal regulations require that the Hemoglobin test be performed and results documented:

- At the time of certification for an applicant
- OR
- Within 60 days of certification for an applicant who is refusing the test on the day of certification but has at least one other qualifying risk factor

- For an infant who is first certifying on the program from 9 to 11 months of age,

Hemoglobin test may be performed by WIC or medical referral data may be accepted from a healthcare provider. If referral data is used, the test must have been performed within 60 days of the certification date, and be reflective of the participants' status.

The test must be performed and/or documented for each participant status according to the following schedule:

Anemia Screening Schedule

| Category | When/ How Often |
|----------------------|--|
| Pregnant Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemoglobin is required at certification |
| Breastfeeding Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemoglobin is required at certification • Blood test results must be reflective of the woman’s category (not taken during pregnancy) • CDC recommends that anemia screening be done at 4 to 6 weeks after delivery. <p>For breastfeeding women who are 6-12 months postpartum no additional test is necessary if a test was performed during the first six months postpartum.</p> |
| Postpartum Women | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemoglobin is required at certification • Blood test results must be reflective of the woman’s category (not taken during pregnancy) • CDC recommends that anemia screening be done at 4 to 6 weeks after delivery. |
| Infant < 9 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemoglobin test not required until 12 months of age. |
| Infant 9 – 11 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If first certified between 9-11 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blood work may be obtained from referral sources • or delayed and performed at subsequent follow-up at 12-13 months of age. |
| Child | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required at 12 month and 18 month recertification visits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Or any recertification visit between 12 and 18 months <p>A child screened at 18 months of age whose results were within normal range would not require another blood test until 30 months of age.</p> <p>Children over age 18 months require hemoglobin screening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every 12 months if results were within normal range at the last certification • Every 6 months if results were less than the cut-off value at the last certification |

***Circumstances When
A Blood Test is
Not Required***

A hemoglobin test is not required only in the following circumstances:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Infants less than 11 months of age |
| 2 | Children over 18 months of age where results of Hgb test were within normal limits at the previous certification. |
| 3 | Participants with a medical condition such as hemophilia, osteogenesis imperfect, or a serious skin disease, where the blood collection procedure could cause harm to the applicant. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the condition is treatable, such as a skin disease, a written statement from the client's physician must be provided at each subsequent certification which states the client's blood testing should continue to be waived• If the condition is considered "lifelong" such as hemophilia, only one statement at the initial certification visit is required |
| 4 | Participants whose religious belief will not allow blood to be drawn. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A statement of the participant or parent/guardian's refusal to have blood drawn must be included in the participant's file. Either a written signed statement by the participant or written documentation by the WIC CPA is acceptable. |

***Refusal of
Blood Test***

If a participant or parent/guardian of a participant refuses to comply with blood work requirements:

- CPA will counsel the participant or parent/guardian of the participant regarding the importance of anemia screening
- CPA will make every reasonable effort to obtain the hematological data from a referral source
- Participants will not be denied benefits or be disqualified from the program

***Documentation
Required When a
Blood Test is Not
Performed***

If a hemoglobin test is not performed at the certification visit because of a circumstance where a blood test is not required or because of a participant or parent/guardian refusal of blood test, the "No Test Performed Reason" must be documented in the Journey System.

Deferred Blood Work for 60 Days

The option to defer the collection of blood test data for up to 60 days after the date of certification, is only allowed if the applicant has at least one qualifying nutritional risk factor at the time of certification.

If the applicant has no identified nutritional risk factors, collection of the hemoglobin test cannot be deferred

Circumstances when the hemoglobin test may be deferred at certification for a maximum of 60 days include:

- Machine malfunction at clinic site or unexpected staff shortage the day of the clinic
- Other situations as determined by CPA. (These situations may include uncooperative child, bringing in referral data from a recent physician visit, etc.)

Failure to obtain referral data

If the participant fails to bring in the referral data within 60 days of certification date, and WIC is unable to complete the test (such as a parent who fails to bring in a child to be tested):

- At nutrition education visit, CPA will counsel the participant regarding importance of anemia screening
- At the next certification visit, WIC will perform the hemoglobin test.
- Participant will not be denied benefits or disqualified from the program

Use of Hematological Data From Referral Source

The use of referral hematological data is permitted as long as:

- ***The test was performed within 60 days of the certification date***
- It is reflective of the woman applicant's category
- It conforms to the anemia screening schedule for infants and children. medical data date
- It contains the required information as outlined in the following section

Information Contained on the Referral

A release of information form should be signed by the participant or responsible party prior to contacting the health care provider for blood work information.

Medical referral data must include the following:

- Date of hemoglobin/hematocrit test. Date of test must be within 60 days of certification date
- Participant's name
- Signature and title of health care professional submitting the data

Phone documentation can be used, or the referral data may be faxed to the WIC clinic.

WIC Allowable Costs

Fees for blood tests are allowable only to determine nutritional risk for certification purposes. Any follow-up tests that may be indicated due to a participant's condition are not allowable WIC costs.
