SCD Treatment Care Teams

Two large university-based centers in the state of Alabama provide comprehensive medical care to pediatric patients with SCD. These centers are located in urban areas of the state, specifically Birmingham and Mobile, and are approximately 250 miles apart. St. Jude in Huntsville also serve as a treatment center.

UAB has established three satellite facilities to assist the community with providing localized treatment facilities. Their locations are:

- Tuscaloosa, AL - University Medical Center
- Opelika, AL - Employee Wellness Center
- Montgomery, AL - Baptist South Montgomery, Morrow Medical Tower

SCD Organizations

AREA 1 BIRMINGHAM
Central Alabama Sickle Cell Foundation
3813 Avenue I
Birmingham, AL 35218
205-780-2355 phone
sicklecellbham.org

AREA 2 TUSCALOOSA
Sickle Cell Association - West AL
700 Energy Center Blvd Suite 403
Northport, AL 35473
205-758-1761 phone
sicklecellwestal.org
Facebook: SickleCellWAL

AREA 4 MONTGOMERY
Sickle Cell Foundation of Greater Montgomery
3180 US Hwy 80 W.
P.O. Box 9278
Montgomery, AL 36108
334-286-9122 phone
1-888-767-4255 toll free
riverregionsickle.com

AREA 5 TUSKEGEE
Southeast Alabama Sickle Cell Association Inc.
4201 W. MLK Hwy
Tuskegee, AL 36087
800-854-1367 toll free
334-727-9390 fax
334-727-6120 office (1)
334-727-6900 office (2)
seasca.com

AREA 6 MOBILE
Sickle Cell Disease Association - Mobile, AL
P.O. Box 40696
1453 Springhill Avenue
Mobile, AL 36604
251-432-3031 office

AREA 7 HUNTSVILLE
North Alabama Sickle Cell Foundation
224 Church Street Suite B
P.O. Box 813
Huntsville, AL 35801
256-536-2723 office
sicklena.org

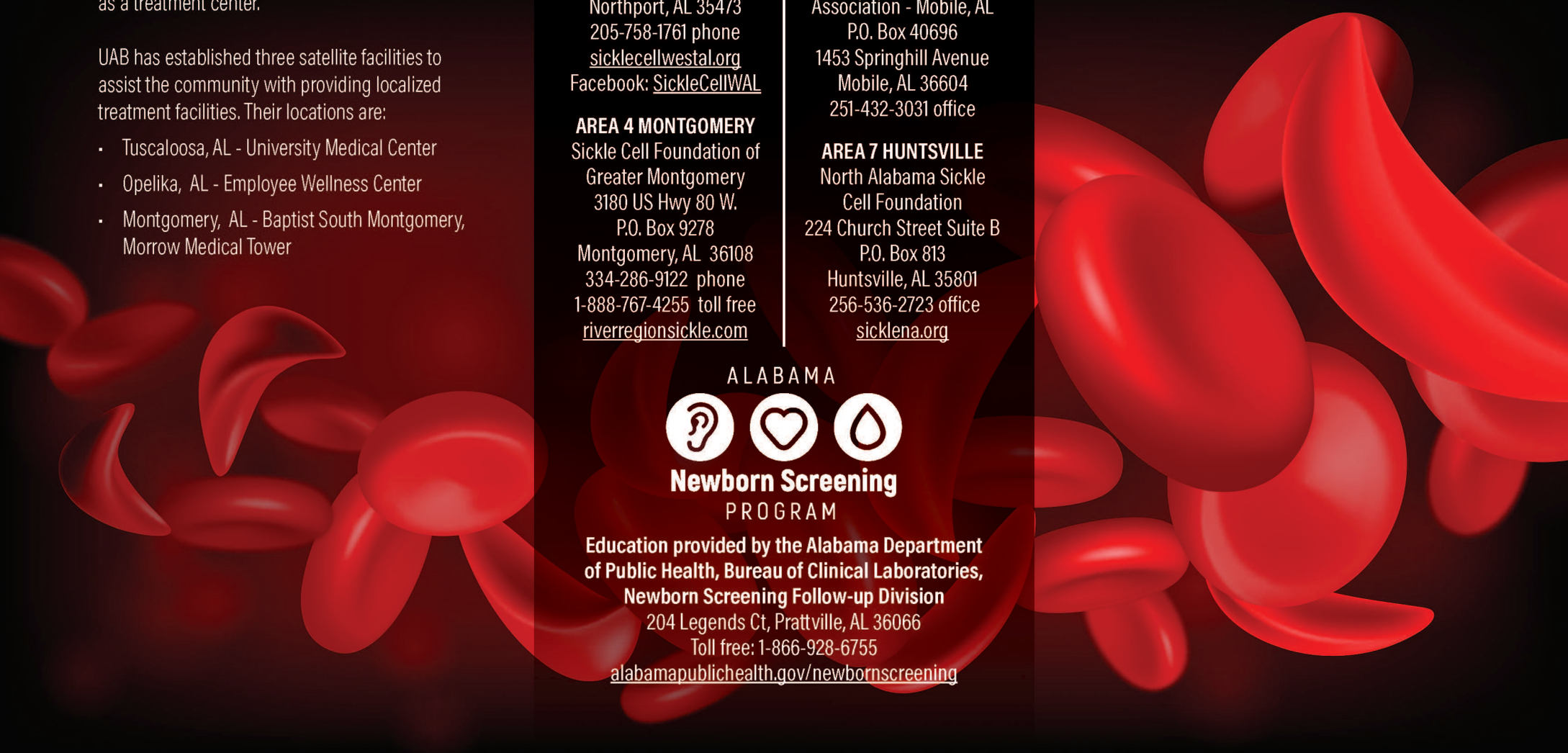
ALABAMA
Newborn Screening
PROGRAM

Education provided by the Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Clinical Laboratories, Newborn Screening Follow-up Division
204 Legends Ct, Prattville, AL 36066
Toll free: 1-866-928-6755
alabamapublichealth.gov/newbornscreening

Understanding Sickle Cell Disease

ALABAMA
Newborn Screening
PROGRAM

ALABAMA PUBLIC HEALTH



What Is Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)?

SCD is an inherited blood disorder marked by defective hemoglobin. People with SCD get it from the genes they inherit from their parents. Sickle cell anemia is a type of SCD that affects many people who are Black. It is a serious health issue that makes a person's red blood cells become C-shaped, curved, or sickle instead of round. These curved red blood cells may not move easily through blood vessels and are not able to carry oxygen throughout the body. This decrease in blood flow can lead to pain and organ damage. People with SCD will need lifelong medical care.

Complications of SCD

SCD can lead to various complications. Sickle-shaped cells can block blood flow to an area of the brain causing a stroke. Signs of a stroke include weakness or numbness of the arms and legs, sudden speech difficulties, and loss of consciousness. Other complications of SCD include breathing problems (shortness of breath or pain when breathing or both), extreme tiredness, organ damage, headache or dizziness, painful erections, weakness or a hard time moving some parts of the body, yellowish skin color (jaundice), swelling of the hands and feet, and periodic episodes of pain that can occur separately or together.

Prevention and Treatment of SCD Complications

If you have sickle cell disease, here are some prevention tips to stay healthy:

- Get genetic counseling for risks and treatments.
- Get vaccinated. People with SCD can become sick from some illnesses that do not cause illness in other people. Your doctor can tell you which vaccines you need.
- Avoid your "triggers," or things that lead to pain.
- Take care of yourself: eat well, get rest, drink plenty of water, avoid smoking, vaping, alcohol, and drugs which can "trigger" a sickle cell crisis.
- Dress in layers to avoid getting too hot or too cold.
- For children, if you don't feel well, tell an adult right away. In school, don't wait until the end of class or sports practice. Early help may prevent a small problem from turning into a big one.

Treatments have different goals, but ultimately to stay healthy. Some treatments are as follows:

- There are different kinds of medicines for SCD. Some keep red blood cells round and plump and others prevent cells from clumping together or breaking down so they can carry oxygen more easily.
- A blood transfusion adds more healthy blood cells, which can help improve anemia.
- Pain medicine relieves pain during a pain crisis.
- A stem cell transplant can cure some kinds of SCD. Someday, gene therapy may become another cure.

If you have SCD, stay in touch with your care team. Go to all your doctor's visits. Tell the care team how you're doing. Ask questions. Take medicines exactly as your doctor recommends. Together you'll work toward the goal of feeling well.

