What is Newborn Hearing Screening?

Newborn hearing screening is a safe and simple test to check your baby’s hearing right after birth. This does not hurt your baby!

This test is just a screening. It will not diagnose hearing loss.

If your baby does not pass, he or she may have:
• Hearing loss
• Fluid in the ears
• Been moving or fussy during the test

There are two tests that may be used:
• Otoacoustic Emissions (OAEs)
• Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)

Why is Newborn Hearing Important?

• Hearing loss is one of the most common conditions present at birth
• Babies cannot tell us if they cannot hear
• Early diagnosis of hearing loss is important for speech and language development.

For more information, please refer to http://kidshearinghealth.wustl.edu
www.ectacenter.org

Scan here with your mobile device to learn more!

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Hearing Checklist Timeline

It is important to have your baby’s hearing tested in the first months of life.

• All babies should have their hearing screened by 1 month of age

• Babies who do not pass their hearing screening should be seen by an audiologist for follow-up testing by 3 months of age

• Babies who are diagnosed with hearing loss should start early intervention services by 6 months of age

What’s Next?

If your baby does NOT pass....

...he or she is referred to the audiologist for a diagnostic hearing test.
A diagnostic test gives us specific information about what your baby can hear and helps to determine the type of hearing loss.

If your baby does pass...

...It is still important to keep track of any changes in your baby’s hearing over time.
It is possible that your child has hearing loss that is missed by the first test, as some hearing losses are progressive, or develop later in life.

Otoacoustic Emissions (OAEs)

In an OAE test, a soft earbud is placed in your baby’s ear and soft signals are played. A healthy ear responds to these signals by producing sounds, called otoacoustic emissions. This is what is being measured in the test.

The best test results are measured when the baby is calm and/or sleeping. This test usually takes 15-20 minutes.

Any fluid in your baby’s ear canal and/or the baby’s movement may alter the test results.

Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)

In an ABR test, a soft earbud is placed in your baby’s ear and simple sticker electrodes are placed on your baby’s head.

Sounds are played through the earbud into your baby’s ear and the sticker electrodes measure how the brain and ear are responding to the sound.

The test results are clear and more accurate when your baby is calm and/or sleeping. This test usually takes 30-60 minutes.

Just like the OAE, any fluid in your baby’s ear canal and/or the baby’s movement may influence the accuracy of the test.

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