

Your Baby's Hearing Test

TIPS TO PREPARE



Scheduling

- It is important for your baby to be asleep during the test. Try to schedule the appointment during your baby's naptime.
- If there are other young children in the family, either plan for childcare or bring another adult with you to care for your other children since you will be with your baby during the hearing test.
- If you cannot make the appointment you scheduled, or if your baby is sick on the day of the test, please be sure to call the clinic and reschedule.

The Day of the Appointment

- Remember to bring identification, your baby's insurance information and any paperwork the provider sent for your appointment.
- Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start time of your appointment to complete registration and get settled before the test begins.
- Try not to let your baby nap during the car ride to the appointment because the test will be completed more quickly and be more accurate if your baby is asleep. If possible, ask another adult to come with you to entertain your baby during the car ride.
- Make sure your baby is hungry by waiting to feed until you arrive at the appointment. Babies sleep well on a full stomach.

Tips for Parents/Caregivers

- The hearing test can last one to two hours so dress comfortably, and in layers.
- Ask family members if any relative has been diagnosed with childhood hearing loss.
- Be prepared to share information about your pregnancy, your baby's birth history and any known risk factors for hearing loss.

The Hearing Tests

Audiologists use a variety of tests to check your baby's hearing. These tests are different from the ones used for older children and adults because they measure your baby's responses to sound by recording responses from the inner ear (cochlear) and the hearing (auditory) nerve while your baby sleeps.

The most common tests:

Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) – A tiny, rubber probe is placed in your baby's ear. Sounds are sent through the probe into the ear. A microphone in the probe picks up echoes made in the ear in response to those sounds. If hearing is normal, an echo is present. If there is a hearing loss, an echo won't be present.

Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) – Band-Aid like sensors are placed on your baby's head, usually on the forehead and behind each ear. Sounds are played in your baby's ears using earphones. The sensors pick up responses from the hearing (auditory) nerve and a computer measures the responses.

Auditory Steady-State Response (ASSR) – This test is a lot like the ABR. Electrodes are placed on your baby's head and sounds are presented to your baby's ears through earphones. Audiologists sometimes use the ASSR test to better estimate the level of hearing loss, particularly if the loss is within the severe to profound range.

Tympanometry – A small probe is placed in your baby's ear and the air pressure is gently changed. This test shows how the eardrum moves and is helpful in confirming if there is fluid in the middle ear.

After the Evaluation - Test Results and Next Steps

- The audiologist who tested your baby's hearing will discuss the results with you once testing is completed.
- If more testing is needed, try to schedule the next appointment before you leave.
- If a hearing loss is identified, talk to your audiologist about the next steps including additional testing, referrals to other medical providers, and early intervention services.
- Ask for a copy of the hearing test report to keep with your records.



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