

Why Screen Newborns?

Newborn hearing screenings are extremely important. When newborns have hearing loss and are diagnosed early, effective intervention is available to help them achieve normal or nearly normal speech, language, and hearing milestones.

- Approximately 3-6 of every 1,000 newborns have significant hearing problems.
- More than 95 percent of newborns who are born deaf have parents with normal hearing.
- Hearing loss is invisible; it cannot be seen by examining your newborn's ears.
- Most newborns with hearing loss have no signs or symptoms.

What Should I Know About the Hearing Screening?

- Hearing screenings are fast, safe, and painless.
- Sometimes newborns are screened more than once.
- Hearing screenings take about 10 minutes.
- Some babies sleep through the hearing screening.
- You will receive the hearing screening results before you leave the hospital.

The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) Year 2013 Position Statement

The American Academy of Audiology, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the Council on Education of the Deaf, and the Directors of Speech and Hearing Programs in State Health and Welfare Agencies have joined together to endorse universal detection of infants with hearing loss. The goal is that all infants with hearing loss will be identified before three months of age and receive intervention by six months of age.

Visit **www.HowsYourHearing.org** to “Find an Audiologist” in your local area.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY 

800-AAA-2336
www.audiology.org

Newborn Hearing Screening



All newborns should be screened for hearing loss.

Make sure your newborn's hearing is screened before leaving the hospital.

What if My Newborn Does Not Pass the Hearing Screening?

Some newborns who need a follow-up hearing screening or a hearing test have normal hearing—BUT some have hearing loss.

If your newborn does not pass the screening, it is important to make an appointment with an audiologist for a complete hearing test.

What if My Newborn Passes the Hearing Screening?

Newborns who pass the screenings usually have normal hearing. However, some newborns might hear well enough to pass a screening, even though their hearing is not perfectly normal. Some newborns may pass the screening, yet they can lose hearing after the screening from illness, medications, or genetic reasons—after leaving the hospital. Therefore, even if your newborn passes the screening, tell your audiologist or physician if you suspect hearing loss at any time.

Other Warning Signs of Hearing Loss

Your newborn might be at risk for delayed onset hearing loss if any of the following apply to your newborn (below). If one or more apply to your newborn, make an appointment with your child’s physician or an audiologist.

- You or another caregiver has concerns.
- Family history of childhood hearing loss.
- Neonatal intensive care stay with ECMO therapy.
- Chemotherapy.
- Some infections that occur before and after birth (including CMV, bacterial and viral meningitis).
- Some disorders that affect the baby’s nervous system.

Speech Language and Hearing Skills

An infant with normal hearing should be able to do the following:

Around **two months** of age

- Startles to loud sound
- Quiets to familiar voices
- Makes vowel sounds such as “ohh”

Around **four months** of age

- Looks for sound sources
- Starts babbling
- Makes squeals and chuckles

Around **six months** of age

- Turns head toward loud sounds
- Begins to imitate speech sound
- Babbles sounds such as “ba-ba”

Around **nine months** of age

- Imitates speech sounds of others
- Understands “no-no” or “bye-bye”
- Turns head toward soft sounds

Around **12 months** of age

- Correctly uses “ma-ma” or “da-da”
- Gives toy when asked
- Responds to singing or music

Most States Require Newborn Hearing Screening Tests

If your infant has had a hearing screening and is unable to do some of the examples to the left (based on his or her age), schedule a follow-up appointment with an audiologist to have his or her hearing checked again.

Hearing loss in infants is a hidden disability, and it is important to pay attention to their development and get their hearing tested.

Once an appointment has been made for your newborn’s next hearing test, make sure you have the following information:

Audiologist’s Name

Office Name

Office Phone Number

Appointment Date

Appointment Time

Appointment Location/Address

