

1. Your Baby's Hearing Screen

If the screening test doesn't show a strong response from one or both of your baby's ears:

This often happens and does not necessarily mean your baby has a hearing loss. There are a number of reasons why it might be difficult to check your baby's hearing. Your baby may have been unsettled at the time of the test. They may have fluid or a temporary blockage in the ear after the birth. There may have been background noise when the test was carried out. You will be asked to bring your baby back for further tests. You will be given a leaflet that explains what this involves.

When will I get the results of the screening test?

The results will usually be given to you at the time of the screening test. If you have any concerns or questions about your baby's result, contact the hospital or health centre where the screening test was done. If your baby was tested at home contact your Health Visitor. You can find the contact details at the end of this leaflet.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about your baby's hearing screen contact the hospital or health centre that will carry out the hearing screening test. You can also find out more from your health visitor, midwife or local audiology department.

This area is participating in the



For more details about your baby's hearing screening test contact:



Information for parents to be and parents of new born babies

Your Baby's Hearing Screen

Your baby will be given a series of routine health checks in the first few weeks of life. This can include a hearing screen. The hearing screen uses a quick and simple test to check the hearing of all newborn babies.

Why screen my baby's hearing?

A small number of babies are born with a hearing loss. It is not easy to identify that a young baby has a hearing loss. This screening test will allow those babies who have a hearing loss to be identified early. Early identification is known to be important for the development of the child. It also means that support and information can be provided to the parents at an early stage.

No one in my family has a hearing loss. Does my baby still need to have the screening test?

Yes. It is important to screen all babies. One to two babies in every 1,000 is born with a hearing loss in one or both ears. Most of these babies are born into families with no experience or history of hearing loss.

When will the screening test be done?

The screening test will be done within the first few weeks of life. This may be done before you leave the maternity unit. In some areas it will be carried out at home or at a local surgery or health clinic. Your midwife or the person who gave you this leaflet will be able to tell you where and when the test will happen. If your baby's hearing is not tested, ask your health visitor, midwife, local audiology department or family doctor to arrange an appointment.

Will the screening test be painful for my baby?

No. It does not hurt and is not uncomfortable. The screening test will usually be done while your baby is asleep and is very quick. No anaesthetic or sedatives are used.



OAE SCREENING TEST



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What does the screening test involve?

A trained hearing screener or health visitor carries out the screening test in a quiet place. They place a small soft tipped ear-piece in the outer part of your baby's ear, which sends clicking sounds down the ear. When an ear receives sound, the inner part, known as the cochlea, usually produces an echo. Using a computer, the screener can see how your baby's ears respond to sound. This is called the Otoacoustic Emissions test (OAE).

The test only takes a few minutes. You can stay with your baby while the test is done.

What do the results mean?

If the screening test shows a strong response from both of your baby's ears:

This means that your baby is unlikely to have a hearing loss.

After the screening test you may be given two checklists of the sounds that your baby should react to and the types of sounds that they should make as they grow older. Your health visitor may also be able to provide you with a checklist. It is important to check your child's hearing as they grow up. If you have any concerns about your child's hearing, discuss them with your health visitor or family doctor. Your child's hearing can be tested at any age.