



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



Your Baby's Visit to the Audiology Clinic

Parent Information

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Your Baby's Visit to the Audiology Clinic

Your baby has been referred to the audiology clinic for further hearing tests. This leaflet explains why these are needed and what is involved.

An audiology clinic is usually part of the local hospital and has special equipment which can test your baby's hearing. The tests carried out at the audiology clinic will give you and the audiologist better information about your baby's hearing. An audiologist is someone who specialises in hearing.

Early testing means that if a baby has a hearing loss the parents will know about it when their baby is very young. This is known to be important for the development of the child. It also means that parents can receive the information and support they need at an early stage.

Why does my baby need further tests?

Babies need to have further tests because the hearing screening tests did not show a clear response in one or both ears. About 2-3 babies in every 100 do not show a clear response on the screening tests and are referred to audiology. Being sent for further tests does not necessarily mean your baby has a hearing loss.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about your baby's hearing test, you can contact the hospital that will carry out the test.

You can also speak to your health visitor, midwife or local audiology department or visit the NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme website at: <http://hearing.screening.nhs.uk>

For information and support about your child's hearing, contact the National Deaf Children's Society Freephone Helpline on 0808 800 8880 (10am to 5pm, Mon-Fri), or send an email to: helpline@ndcs.org.uk or visit the website: www.ndcs.org.uk



What happens if the tests show satisfactory hearing?

This means that your baby is unlikely to have a hearing loss. Children can develop or acquire a hearing loss later on so it is important to check your child's hearing as they grow up. Your red book contains two checklists of the sounds that your baby should react to, and the types of sounds that they should make, as they grow older. It is important that you keep a check on your child's hearing as they grow and 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 again at any age.

What if the tests show a hearing loss?

If this happens your audiologist will explain what the results mean. Further tests may be needed before you know about your baby's hearing. There are different types and levels of hearing loss. The results of the tests done at the clinic will help the audiologist ensure that you and your baby get the right support and information

What is the likelihood of my baby having a hearing loss?

Overall, about one baby in 13 tested at the audiology clinic will have a permanent hearing loss in one or both ears. Some babies will have a temporary hearing loss and most will have satisfactory hearing. Finding out early means that you and your baby will get advice and support right from the start.

My baby seems to be responding to sound. Do I need to take my baby for further tests?

It is important that you attend the appointment. This is because babies who have a hearing loss will usually react to some sounds. If your baby does have a hearing loss, it is important to find out as soon as possible.



"You know, I was quite nervous about the appointment. But when I got there the staff were really warm and friendly. They put me at ease and were extremely supportive. The appointment was quite straight forward really and Amir slept through it all."

Mother



What tests will they do at the audiology clinic?

The appointment will usually take about one to two hours. This includes time to settle your baby. The tests will not hurt or be uncomfortable for your baby. You will be able to stay with your baby while the tests are done. You may want to take a partner or friend or relative with you to the appointment.

The tests look similar to those used for your baby's screening tests but give more detailed information about your baby's hearing.

One of the tests that may be used involves putting a small soft-tipped earpiece in the outer part of your baby's ear. The earpiece sends clicking sounds down the ear. When an ear receives sound the inner part, known as the cochlea, usually produces an echo. The testing equipment can pick up this response. This is called an Otoacoustic Emission (OAE) test.

Another test used involves small sensors being placed on your baby's head. This is called the Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) test. Headphones are placed over your baby's ears and a series of clicking sounds are played. A computer measures how well your baby's ears respond to sound.

What will happen after the tests?

Your audiologist will usually be able to explain the results at the end of the appointment. They will explain what the results mean for your baby's hearing and whether any further tests are necessary.