



SERTOMA SPEECH & HEARING CENTERS

## AUDIOLOGY

# Infant Hearing Screening

### **Purpose of infant hearing screenings**

Hearing screenings for newborns is the standard of care in the US. Roughly 98% of all babies have their hearing screened within the first few weeks of life.

Screenings identify newborns who are likely to have hearing loss and need further evaluation.

In addition, screenings identify newborns with medical conditions that increase the risks of hearing loss in the future—and the importance of ongoing monitoring of their hearing status.

Infants who fail hearing screenings should get a comprehensive hearing evaluation. In all cases, the goal is to confirm hearing loss by three months of age.

### **Type of hearing screening**

We perform an otoacoustic emissions screening or OAE. OAE

screenings are accurate, fast, and inexpensive.

An OAE screening determines if the child hears through the level of the cochlea, the tiny snail-shaped part of the ear. Our fee is \$125.00.

### **OAE procedure**

Your baby can be asleep or resting quietly. A small probe tip is placed in the baby's ear canal. The probe detects an emission, a nearly inaudible sound caused by vibration of the outer hair cells.

If the child has debris in the ear canal, fluid in the middle ear, or a hearing loss, an emission will not be measured. We also do Auditory Brainstem Response testing for babies who failed the Newborn Hearing Screening.

Ears are screened one at a time. Your baby will be positioned on

their side, with the ear being screened facing up.

### **Post-screening consultation**

Passing a screening does not mean that a child has normal hearing. Because minimal and frequency-specific hearing losses are not targeted by newborn hearing screenings, newborns with these losses may pass a hearing screen.

Because hearing losses like this have the potential to interfere with your baby's speech and educational development, hearing, speech, and language milestones should receive continuous monitoring throughout childhood.

Your audiologist will explain your baby's results, and if she recommends additional follow-ups or monitoring, a recommended course of future action will be mapped out for you.

CREST HILL - 630-633-5060

PALOS HILLS - 708-599-9500

For directions and office hours:

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### Signs of Hearing Loss

If your child exhibits one or more of the following, consult your audiologist:

- Your child's speech is not progressing
- Your child has difficulty identifying where sounds come from.
- Your child does not startle to loud sounds.
- Your child's ability to produce and understand spoken language is delayed for their age.
- Your child appears to not pay attention.
- Your child has frequent ear infections.

Be sure you discuss your observations and concerns with your audiologist because these signs do not necessarily mean that your child has a hearing problem.

### Hearing Loss Develops Over Time

Some babies have hearing within normal limits at birth, but hearing loss develops gradually over time, a condition that may result from:

- Spending 48 hours or more in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Having a neurological disorder associated with hearing loss (check with your audiologist)
- Exposure to infection before

birth

- Head, face, or ears formed in a different way
- Infection around the brain and spinal cord (bacterial-meningitis)
- Significant jaundice (hyperbilirubinemia) in babies needing an exchange transfusion
- Injury to the head that needed medical care
- Ear infections with fluid that last a long time

If your infant has risk factors for a progressive hearing loss or if you have concerns about your child's responses to sound or speech development, you should contact your baby's doctor and an audiologist.

### No Child Is Too Young To Test

Delay in getting help for your baby compromises language development, lessens communication, and reduces school performance.

### Remember 1-3-6

- **By 1 month of age:** Obtain hearing screen no later than 1 month of age.
- **By 3 months of age:** Refer immediately to a pediatric audiologist if child did not pass hearing screening and audiological evaluation has not been completed. Hearing status should be confirmed by audiological evaluation no later than 3 months of age.

- **By 6 months of age:** Verify entry into Early Intervention services no later than 6 months of age if hearing loss is confirmed.

### Give Us a Call

Call us if you would like to talk to an audiologist about your baby's hearing or a speech-language pathologist about your baby's speech development.

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