

Your Baby's Hearing: It is important to test again.



What if my baby reacts to loud sounds or when I clap next to his head?

Some babies with hearing loss will look or make a face when there is a loud noise like clapping or banging pots. This depends on the level of hearing loss in each ear. Even when babies can hear loud noises, they may not be able to hear all of the sounds that are important for speech development.



Hearing loss isn't very common, so my baby is probably fine, right?

Hearing loss is one of the most common conditions that can be identified at birth. Your baby had a REFER result in the newborn screening test, which means that some level of hearing loss was found. The only way to know for sure whether your baby has permanent hearing loss or a temporary condition is to see an audiologist as soon as possible.

My baby has fluid in her ear. Will the test still work correctly?

Yes. The test can be done before all of the fluid is gone, and it can tell us if the hearing loss is temporary or permanent. It is important to find out how well your baby can hear even if fluid is present.

My baby can't talk yet, so there isn't a rush to see if he has hearing loss. Can we test again later if we notice anything?

Waiting and not identifying hearing loss as soon as possible could allow your baby to fall behind in development of language skills. Babies who are identified early can start early intervention and get connected to resources. Interventions (ex. hearing aids) help prevent speech and language delays. Even before a baby can talk they are learning what different words sound like and other important pieces of language and talking.



We understand you might have some questions about your baby's REFER result on the newborn screen. This sheet attempts to answer some of the more common questions that parents have. If any aren't clear, or you don't see your question, please contact us!



? Can children younger than 12 months be fitted with hearing aids?

✓ Children younger than **1 month** of age can be fit with hearing aids and benefit from them.

? Do infants need to be sedated to complete diagnostic testing?

✓ Younger infants (between four to eight weeks of age) can typically be tested without sedation.

? Do most infants who do not pass the screening eventually have normal hearing?

✓ 30 to 50 percent of Minnesota infants who do not pass the follow up screening (after leaving the hospital) have some type/degree of hearing loss.



? Is it OK to wait to rescreen until fluid in the ear clears up?

✓ No, the test can be done before fluid is gone. About 60% of infants with a delayed diagnosis have a history of middle ear fluid and multiple rescreens.

? Is it still important to do diagnostic testing for infants with a REFER result in just one ear?

✓ Yes. It is important to know if babies have hearing loss in just one ear because early intervention can help them stay on track with speech and language skills.



If you have other questions, or need anything else related to your baby's hearing, please contact your local public health department, or the Minnesota Department of Health Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) program.

www.ImproveEHDI.org/mn