

YOUR BABY'S HEARING SCREEN



Why do we screen babies for hearing loss?

Two out of 1,000 babies have hearing loss at birth. Two more develop hearing loss by the age of five. These children may hear some sounds but miss others, making it harder to learn speech and language. This can lead to behaviour and emotional challenges.

The Infant Hearing Program provides hearing screening for all newborns in hospital or community settings and:

- Identifies newborns with permanent hearing loss
- Supports language development so they will be ready to start school
- Identifies and monitors children at risk of developing hearing loss

Hearing screen results

- Pass** – Baby hears in both ears
- Pass but at risk** – Baby hears in both ears but is at risk for developing hearing loss. Follow-up with an Infant Hearing Program audiologist will be booked when your baby is 15 to 18 months
- Refer** – Further testing is needed
- No Result** – Hearing screen incomplete and further testing is needed

} **Book another hearing screen**

Preparing for further testing:

- Avoid lotion on your baby's head on the day of the test
- Feed your baby just before the appointment
- Bring your baby sleeping or resting quietly in a car seat, and don't forget:
 - Baby's Ontario health card number (if available)
 - Blanket and other items to calm your baby
 - Extra diapers and clothes

What if my baby does not pass the next hearing screen?

Your baby will be referred to an audiologist with the Infant Hearing Program who has the training and equipment needed for a full hearing assessment.

Checking if your baby is at higher risk for hearing loss

Babies with certain risks for hearing loss will be monitored. The same sample collected by the hospital or midwife for the newborn blood spot screening can be screened for:

- Cytomegalovirus infection – babies usually show no symptoms at birth but hearing loss could develop later
- Some common genetic risk factors – there is usually no family history of hearing loss

You have chosen to:

- Consent** – You will only be contacted with results if a risk is found.
- Decline** – Your baby will not have this screen. Any change in hearing may not be found right away and could delay speech and language development.

Can hearing loss happen later in my child's life?

Hearing loss can develop during childhood. You should have your baby's hearing tested by an audiologist if you have concerns about their hearing, speech or language development.

For more information please visit:
ontario.ca/infantheating