


Can Your Baby Hear You?



*How to Get
Your Baby's
Hearing
Screened*

**New York State
Department of Health**

Can Your Baby Hear You?

IF YOUR BABY IS BORN IN A HOSPITAL IN New York State, you don't have to wonder. All New York babies should have their hearing checked.

Before you leave the hospital, you will be told how and where to have your baby's hearing checked closer to your home. If you have any questions, please ask your baby's doctor or clinic.

Hearing is very important. Your baby needs to hear sounds to learn how to talk and learn about the world. Hearing is very important in the early months to prevent possible problems with language or schoolwork later on.

Every baby's hearing should be checked as soon after birth as possible. The best thing to do is to have your baby's hearing checked within four weeks after your baby comes home from the hospital, and no later than 12 weeks after birth. If your baby has a hearing loss, the sooner you know it, the better. Out of 1,000 babies, about two to four will have a serious hearing loss.

How Your Baby's Hearing Will Be Checked

A screening is a quick check to see if your baby hears. A trained person will check your baby's hearing. The screening takes only a short time. It is okay if your baby is asleep while this is done. To screen your baby, either:

- § *A tiny microphone may be placed in your baby's ear, or,*
- § *Your baby may wear special earphones and have tiny pads placed on his or her head.*

Then, soft sounds will be played and your baby's hearing will be measured.

You will be given a brochure telling you what the screening means. Some babies do not pass. Your baby's movements may lead to false results. Your baby may need a second screening to be sure he or she hears. If your baby needs to be checked again, you will be told how to have this done.

What Causes Hearing Loss?

Sometimes we won't know what causes hearing loss in a baby. Other times it is caused by:

- § *Deafness which runs in families*
- § *Ear infections*
- § *Meningitis*
- § *Other serious infections*

Talk to your baby's doctor or clinic if you have any questions or concerns.

Check Your Child's Hearing and Speech

Most babies will "pass" the hearing screening. This means that your baby is hearing *now*. Even if your baby "passes" the screening, it is still important to check your baby's hearing often. The list below* will help you keep track of your baby's hearing as he or she grows. Good hearing helps babies do the things on this

checklist. If you have any concerns about your child's hearing, at any age, call your baby's doctor or clinic.

Birth to 3 Months

- § *Becomes quiet when around everyday voices or sounds*
- § *Reacts to loud sounds: baby startles, blinks, stops sucking, cries, or wakes up*
- § *Makes soft sounds when awake: baby gurgles*

3 to 6 Months

- § *Turns eyes or head toward sounds: voices, toys that make noise, a barking dog*
- § *Starts to make speech-like sounds: "ga," "ooh," "ba," and p, b, m sounds*
- § *Reacts to a change in your tone of voice*

6 to 9 Months

- § *Responds to soft sounds, especially talking*
- § *Responds to own name and looks when called*
- § *Understands simple words: "no," "bye-bye," "juice"*
- § *Babbles: "da da da," "ma ma ma," "ba ba ba"*

9 to 12 Months

- § *Consistently responds to both soft and loud sounds*
- § *Repeats single words and copies animal sounds*

- § *Points to favorite toys or foods when asked*

12 to 18 Months

- § *Uses 10 or more words*
- § *Follows simple spoken directions: "get the ball"*
- § *Points to people, body parts or toys when asked*
- § *"Bounces" to music*

18 to 24 Months

- § *Uses 20 or more words*
- § *Combines two or more words: "more juice," "what's that?"*
- § *Uses many different consonant sounds at beginning of words, b, g, m*
- § *Listens to simple stories and songs*

2 to 3 Years

- § *Uses sentences with two or three words*
- § *At 2 years, the child's speech is understood some of the time (25%-50%)*
- § *At 3 years, the child's speech is understood most of the time (50%-75%)*
- § *Follows two-step instructions: "get the ball and put it in the box"*

* Adapted from the California Department of Health Services' checklist.

Your child's hearing can and should be checked at any age.

More Help For Your Baby

If your baby has a hearing loss, or may have a hearing loss, you might need more help. Infants, toddlers with special needs, and their families may get help from the New York State Health Department's Early Intervention Program (EIP). EIP offers hearing screening and testing, and support for you, your baby, and your family. To learn more, call your doctor, clinic, or the EIP in your county or borough.

To learn more about newborn hearing screening, or EIP, please call (518) 473-7016.

Or, visit the Early Intervention Program Web site (<http://www.health.state.ny.us>). Click on Information For Consumers. Then, choose Early Intervention from the list of topics.

Your Baby's Hearing Screening Visit

Baby's Name:

Time and Date:

Place:

Address:

Contact Number:

To reach your local Early Intervention Program, call:

*Growing Up Healthy
24-Hour Hotline
1-800-522-5006*

In New York City:

*1-800-577-BABY
1-800-577-2229*



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