



*You've counted ten little fingers
and ten little toes,*

*but have you asked about the results
of your baby's hearing screening?*

Over 12,000 Babies In The United States Are Born With Hearing Loss Every Year

That's 33 babies a day! (*American Speech-Language Hearing Association*) Many hard of hearing and deaf children are born to families with no known history of hearing loss or deafness.

Hearing loss may be in one ear or both ears and may range in degree from mild to profound. Different frequencies can be affected that carry sounds important to hearing, understanding and developing speech.

The earlier a diagnosis is made, the better. Experts recommend that a hearing loss be diagnosed and intervention begun by the time a baby is six months old to take advantage of this critical time frame of early language development.

What To Expect From Your Baby's Hearing Screening Test

One of two different types of tests are mandated by New York State and your hospital will decide which one to use.

Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE)

A small probe, with a sensitive microphone attached, is placed in your newborn's ears, one ear at a time. This test measures the infant's response to sound delivered into the ears. The testing is painless, takes about five minutes to complete, and can be done while the baby sleeps.



Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)

This test is conducted by placing small electrodes on your newborn's head. Sound is then introduced to the baby's ears through tiny earphones while the child sleeps. A computer records brain waves to indicate whether the ear and auditory brain stem pathway are responding to sound. This test is painless and takes only about five minutes.

Congratulations on the birth of your newborn!

Whether this is your first child or an addition to your children at home, it is important to be aware of what you can expect from your hospital experience.

What Are My Rights?

It is your right to know what mandatory tests should and will be given before your newborn is discharged.

The Universal Newborn Hearing Screening, a test to identify the risk of hearing loss, is mandatory in New York State and is required by law¹ to be administered before your newborn leaves the hospital. (Exception: Hospitals with fewer than 400 annual births may refer your newborn to another facility for the test.)

It is your right to know when the test will be administered and what additional resources are available when you leave the hospital.

Your newborn should be given this test within 24 to 48 hours of birth either at your bedside or in a quiet room nearby.

It is your right to know the test results.

If your newborn passes the screening, you should be given information written by the Department of Health on how to monitor your baby's hearing. Ongoing monitoring is important as hearing loss can develop after birth.

If your newborn is referred for additional screening, you should know this does not necessarily mean your newborn has a hearing loss. There are many reasons, other than hearing loss, a newborn may need additional screening. You can discuss these reasons with hospital personnel.

A Bright Future With Early Intervention

No baby is too young to fit with amplification. As soon as the hearing loss is confirmed, if amplification is needed, it should be initiated right away. With appropriate family-centered intervention, normal language, and social development for the infant is highly likely. But early intervention is key!

Early Intervention Services

New York State's Early Intervention program ensures that a variety of diagnostic, therapeutic and support services are provided to eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, including²:



- family education and counseling, home visits, and support groups
- special instruction
- speech pathology and audiology
- occupational & physical therapy
- psychological & social work services
- service coordination
- nursing & nutrition services
- vision services
- assistive technology devices and services

The hospital should provide you with contact information for Early Intervention, including a local agency. (Additional resources are listed on the back of the pamphlet.)

Good Hearing Checklist for Your Child³



Birth-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, gurgles.

3-6 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 parent's tone of voice.

6-9 months

Responds to soft sounds, especially talking. Responds to own name and looks when called. Understands simple words: "no," "bye-bye," "juice." Babbles: "dadada," "mamama," "bababa."

9-12 months

Consistently responds to both soft and loud sounds. Repeats single words and copies animal sounds. Points to favorite toys or foods when asked.

12-18 months

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

18-24 months

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

2-3 years

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

For more information on hearing loss:

- > Hearing Loss Association of America (www.hearingloss.org)
- > The League for the Hard Of Hearing (www.lhh.org)
- > Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) (www.agbell.org)
- > American Academy of Audiology (www.audiology.org)
- > Early Intervention: 1-800-522-5006
(www.health.state.ny.us/community/infants_children/early_intervention/index.htm)
- > American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) (www.asha.org)
- > American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery Foundation (www.entnet.org)

Sources

- ¹ A copy of the law, Newborn Hearing Screening, Subpart 69-8, was retrievable on December 31, 2007 from http://www.health.state.ny.us/community/infants_children/early_intervention/regulations/docs/title10_subpart69_8.pdf
- ² The list is from the New York State's Health Department Early Intervention Program's web site. (n.d.). Retrieved December 5, 2007, from http://www.health.state.ny.us/community/infants_children/early_intervention/index.htm
- ³ Milestones are from the New York State Department of Health. (September 2001). Can Your Baby Hear You? How to Get Your Baby's Hearing Screened [Brochure]. The milestone for age range 12-18 months was updated from Laurie Hanin, personal communication, December 26, 2007. Laurie Hanin is the Executive Director of the League for the Hard of Hearing in New York, NY.

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Hearing Loss Association of America
Manhattan Chapter
c/o B. Bryan
905 West End Ave. #141
New York, NY 10025
HLAANYC@aol.com
212-769-HEAR (4327)

The Hearing Loss Association of America is the nation's foremost membership organization for people with hearing loss, providing information, education, support and advocacy.

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