

Your rights

As with all health services, your rights are protected by the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights.

It is important that you have enough information to help you decide whether you want your baby referred to an audiologist for further assessment. You may also want to discuss it with your partner, family or whānau.

If you have concerns or want to know more about newborn hearing screening, check with:

- the hospital that carries out the newborn hearing screening
- your midwife, doctor, specialist or Well Child provider.



The Well Child Tamariki Ora checks include questions for parents about their baby's hearing. The nurse also asks questions about your child's hearing, speech and language progress. Should you have concerns about the way your child listens or responds, it is important to discuss this with your Well Child nurse, early childhood teacher or your doctor.

For further information about newborn hearing screening, visit the National Screening Unit's website: www.nsu.govt.nz

This resource is available to download from:
www.healthed.govt.nz



New Zealand Government

September 2008. Reprinted April 2009. Code HE1924

Newborn Screening
Free health checks for your baby

Newborn Hearing Screening



Referral to Audiologist

🌀 Newborn hearing screening – referral to an audiologist

Your baby's hearing screening shows that a further check is needed. You will be referred to a hearing specialist (audiologist) who will do more tests and give further advice.



🌀 What will the audiologist do?

The audiologist will do a range of diagnostic tests including an auditory brainstem response (ABR). This is similar to the earlier screening test but takes longer. Four small sensors are placed on your baby's head and a series of clicking sounds is played into special earphones. Your baby's responses to low-, middle- and high-pitched sounds are tested – we hear this full range of tones when different people speak.



🌀 What if the audiologist says my baby does not show signs of a hearing loss?

Even if your baby passes the audiologist's test, hearing loss can still develop later. You will probably be advised to have your baby's hearing checked again if there are risk factors, such as infection or family history of permanent childhood hearing loss. The audiologist will tell you if your baby needs a follow-up appointment.

🌀 Why does my baby need another test?

Some babies need another test because the earlier screening did not show a strong enough response in one or both ears. This may be because:

- your baby was unsettled
- there was too much noise in the testing room
- there was fluid in your baby's middle ear that day
- your baby may have a hearing loss.

The audiologist will do a thorough check of your baby's hearing and discuss the results with you.



🌀 How do I prepare my baby for the audiology appointment?

Your baby needs to be asleep during the testing. It's best to go earlier than the appointment time so you can feed and settle your baby to sleep when you get there. Allow plenty of time for the visit – you may be there for a whole morning or afternoon.

🌀 What happens if the audiologist says my baby has a hearing loss?

If the test shows your baby has a hearing loss, the audiologist will talk with you about the help available to your family and whānau. Together, you can plan what you would like to do next. It is best to start planning as soon as possible to help your baby develop language learning and social skills.

🌀 What help is available?

Your audiologist will see you and your baby for more appointments so that together you can learn more about your baby's hearing. Your audiologist may refer you to a Ministry of Education Adviser. Advisers have training and experience in supporting young children with hearing loss and their families and whānau.

It is important that you keep this appointment. It is the best way to be sure about your baby's hearing.