

Appendix F

Your Baby's First Hearing Test*For newborn babies***Why does my baby need a hearing test?**

Most babies can hear well at birth, but a few do not. It is important to find hearing loss as soon as possible. If the problem is found early, it is easier for babies to learn.

An infant with a hearing loss may cry or appear to respond to sounds just like babies with normal hearing. Only a hearing test can tell you if your baby has a hearing loss.

All babies are tested to make sure they are hearing normally. There are many ways to help your baby right away if hearing loss is found.

What should I know about hearing testing?

The test is safe, painless, and can be done in about 10 to 20 minutes. Most babies sleep through the test. **Make sure your baby's hearing is tested before you leave the hospital.**

Why do some babies not pass the hearing test?

Some babies may need another test because:

- Fluid in their ear
- Noise in the test room
- They were moving a lot during the test

Most babies who need another test have normal hearing. But, some babies do not pass the test because they have hearing loss.

If your baby does not pass the hearing test, make sure they are tested again as soon as possible.

Can my baby pass the hearing test and still have a hearing loss?

Some babies hear well enough to pass the first test, but lose their hearing later because of:

- An illness
- Reaction to a medicine

- An injury
- A family history of hearing loss

How can I tell if my baby has hearing loss later?

Watch for signs of hearing loss as your baby grows. A baby with normal speech, language, and hearing should be able to do the activities in these age ranges:

Birth to 3 Months

- Blinks or jumps when there is a sudden loud sound
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to
- Makes sounds like “ohh” and “ahh”

4 to 6 Months

- Looks to see where sounds came from
- Uses many sounds, squeals, and chuckles
- Makes different sounds when excited or angry

7 Months to 1 Year

- Turns head toward loud sounds
- Understands “no-no” or “bye-bye”
- Babbles, for example “baba,” “mamma,” “gaga”
- Repeats simple words and sounds you make
- Correctly uses “mama” or “dada”
- Responds to singing or music
- Points to favorite toys and objects when asked

If you have questions about your baby’s hearing or this list, talk with your baby’s doctor.

Where can I get more Information?

Call the Washington State Department of Health at 206.418.5613, or visit www.doh.wa.gov/earlyhearingloss.

This information is adapted from “Can Your Baby Hear?” by the Washington State Department of Health, © May 2014.