

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING FOR HEARING LOSS

INFORMATION SHEET



What is Newborn Hearing Screening?

Newborn hearing screening is a safe, simple and painless way to know if your baby can hear, or if more testing is needed.

Why does my baby need this screening?

Babies use their hearing to learn speech and language skills that are very important for communication. The first year of life is the most important time for the development of speech and language. When a baby has hearing loss, some or all of the sounds of our speech are not reaching the brain. Newborn hearing screening will identify those babies who need further testing.

How is Newborn Hearing Screening performed?

Screening takes less than 15 minutes and is done in a very quiet room. Your baby can sleep during the screening.

Your midwife will use OAE equipment (OtoAcoustic Emissions) is used for the screening. A soft ear tip is placed in the baby's ears and the baby hears soft sounds. Screening is usually done when a baby is 8 to 48 hours of age.

What is a Sensorineural (permanent) Hearing Loss (SNHL)?

Sensorineural hearing loss affects about 1 in 300 newborns. Approximately one-third of newborns with hearing loss are profoundly 'deaf.' The other two-thirds have hearing loss large enough to interfere with how the baby recognizes and understands sounds and is able to communicate with you and the world.

These babies are also at risk for social, emotional, and learning delays if their hearing loss is not diagnosed and managed soon after birth.

What Does a Pass Result Mean?

A pass result means that the baby's screening does not show signs of a hearing loss at this time. It is possible to have a mild hearing loss and pass the screening. It is also possible for babies to develop hearing loss later.

What Does a Refer Results Mean?

A refer result on the newborn hearing screen means that the baby did not pass the screening and more complete testing is needed. Testing is done by an audiologist (hearing professional) who specializes in testing newborns and infants.

Out of every 10-11 babies who did not pass the screening 1 baby has been found to have a permanent hearing loss (Idaho, 2012 data).

What if I have more Questions?

Please feel comfortable speaking with your midwife about this screening test or the topic of newborn hearing loss.

Idaho Sound Beginnings, Early Hearing Program, can also be reached at 208-334-0829 and can assist you with any questions regarding the screening, the follow-up testing process, pediatric audiologists, or procedural or financial questions you may have.

**For more Information:
Idaho Sound Beginnings,
Early Hearing Program at
(208) 334-0829.**

