



Preparing for Your Baby's Hearing Evaluation

If your baby has been scheduled for a hearing evaluation it's because they didn't pass their newborn hearing screening. Your baby's hearing screening results indicate there could be a hearing loss that is preventing important foundational speech and sound information from reaching your baby's brain. It's important to know the status of your baby's hearing as soon as possible to ensure their brain is accessing all the sounds it needs to grow and learn language. The follow-up evaluation will confirm if your baby has hearing loss.

Learn more about your baby's hearing evaluation and what you can do to prepare for it.

How to Prepare for the Test

- Know that the hearing tests won't cause your baby discomfort.
- Arrange care for other children at home, so you can focus on your baby during the entire session.
- Bring another adult family member or friend with you to help listen to information and to support you if hearing loss is confirmed.
- Be on time for the test session. Leave home early to account for traffic and parking if you're driving or unexpected commute challenges if you're taking public transportation.
- Busy clinics mean that you and your baby may spend some time in the waiting room, so bring a snack and water for yourself. You may get hungry and thirsty, especially if you're nursing.
- Bring a sweater for yourself and an extra blanket for the baby because clinics can get chilly.
- Be ready to take notes, you can use a pen and a notepad or your phone.
- Try to schedule the test when your baby will most likely want to nap. Tests often require that your baby is sleeping for best results.
- If your baby is sick on the day of the test, it's best to reschedule when your baby is better. But don't delay the hearing test any longer than necessary, because every minute counts for your baby's brain development!
- You may be asked to help in the hearing test session by observing your baby's behavior to sounds that are presented in a sound-treated room.

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How to Prepare for the Test *(cont.)*

- You will be asked about your family history. You might want to think about it before the appointment. You could ask family members if any relative, on either the mother's and father's side of the family, had a childhood hearing loss or any other childhood issues or medical problems.
- You will be asked about your pregnancy and birth history. Were there any problems? Did you or your baby take or need medications, and what were those medications? You may want to bring medical reports with you if you have them.
- You will be asked if you've observed your baby responding to sound or your voice. For example, does your baby wake up to sounds? Does your baby become quiet when you talk to them? Does your baby start or stop sucking when they hear your voice?
- Be patient. You may receive information about your baby's hearing right away after the test session, or you may have to wait a few days for the hearing test results.

What to Do Next

- If you find out that your baby has a hearing loss, be sure to schedule a follow-up appointment to confirm the diagnosis. It's best to schedule this appointment before you leave the clinic.
- Once the hearing loss is confirmed, schedule a hearing aid evaluation right away. Your baby's brain needs to be stimulated with sounds like your voice, so they'll need to be fitted with appropriate hearing devices as soon as possible.
- Be sure to get the audiologist's business card, so you can call them later if you have questions. Don't hesitate to call – it's very common to think of new questions after you leave the appointment.

What to Remember

If your child is diagnosed with hearing loss, act quickly and know that you're not alone on this journey. Hearing First is a resource to give you more information about how to grow your baby's brain to learn to listen, talk, sing, and read – just like children with typical hearing. You can also find support from other families of children with hearing loss on the Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) journey in our Family Support Community by visiting www.hearingfirst.org/family.