

It is important to pay attention to infant speech and language development. If there appears to be any delays, get your infant's hearing tested.

Where is additional testing done?

If your baby needs additional testing or you suspect problems with hearing, testing is arranged through the Guam Early Intervention System (GEIS) at 300-5776/5816.

Other Warning Signs of Hearing Loss

Your newborn might be at risk for delayed onset hearing loss if any of the following apply:

- You or another caregiver has concerns.
- Family history of childhood hearing loss.
- Neonatal intensive care stay longer than 5 days.
- Chemotherapy.
- Some infections that occur before and after birth (including CMV, bacterial, and viral meningitis).
- Some disorders that affect the baby's nervous system.

If you have a concern about your infant's hearing and speech development, please contact the:

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Newborn Hearing Screening Program





What is newborn hearing screening?

Newborn hearing screening identifies babies who may have a hearing loss. Hearing loss is any condition that affects how a baby perceives sound. Ask your medical care provider/doctor about hearing screening for your baby, if you have any concerns.

When is newborn hearing screening done?

Newborn hearing screening is performed soon after birth, before your baby goes home.

Why is screening done?

Newborn hearing screenings are extremely important. Language develops very quickly in the early years of life. It is the foundation for all learning. If newborns have hearing loss and are diagnosed early, effective intervention is available to help them achieve typical or nearly typical speech, language, and hearing milestones. Services to minimize delays in development should begin before your baby is six months old.

- 3 in 1,000 babies are born with permanent hearing loss, which makes hearing loss one of the most common birth defects in America.
- More than 95 percent of newborns who are born deaf have parents with normal hearing.
- Hearing loss is invisible; it cannot be seen by examining your newborn's ears.
- Most newborns with hearing loss have no signs or symptoms.

How is hearing screening done?

- A miniature earphone and microphone are placed in the baby's ear, sounds are played, and a response is measured.
- Hearing screenings are fast, safe, and painless.
- Some babies sleep through the hearing screening.
- Hearing screenings take about 10 minutes.
- Sometimes newborns are screened more than once.
- You will receive the hearing screening results before you leave the hospital.

What if My Newborn Does Not Pass the Hearing Screening?

If your newborn does not pass the screening, it is important to take your baby to his or her appointment for further testing by an audiologist. This is the only way to check if your child has a hearing loss. The testing should be completed before your baby is three months of age.

If your baby did not pass the initial hearing screening, and you and your baby are moving off-island, please contact your baby's doctor for help to arrange an appointment for a hearing test before your baby reaches three months of age. A follow-up hearing screening will help check whether your baby has a hearing loss.

What if My Newborn Passes the Hearing Screening?

Newborns who pass the screenings usually have normal hearing. However, some newborns might hear well enough to pass a screening, even though their hearing is not perfectly normal. Some newborns may pass the initial screening, yet they can lose hearing after the screening from illness, medications, or genetic reasons. So, even if your newborn passes the screening, tell your audiologist or physician if you suspect that your baby is having difficulty hearing.

If your baby is unable to do some of the actions listed on the Hearing & Language Skills Chart (below) for his or her age, inform your child's doctor and schedule an appointment with an audiologist to have his or her hearing checked again. Hearing loss in infants is a hidden disability, and it is important to pay attention to their development and get their hearing tested. Hearing screening should be repeated if your child gets more than four ear infections in one year, or any time you have a concern about his or her hearing.

Hearing & Language Skills Chart Your Baby should...

Around two months of age

- Get startled by loud sound
- Become quiet to familiar voices
- Make vowel sounds such as "ohh"

Around four months of age

- Look for sound sources
- Start babbling
- Make squeals and chuckles

Around six months of age

- Turn head toward loud sounds
- Begin to imitate speech sounds
- Babble sounds such as "ba-ba"

Around nine months of age

- Imitate speech sounds of others
- Understand "no-no" and "bye-bye"
- Turn head towards soft sounds

Around 12 months of age

- Correctly uses "ma-ma" or "da-da"
- Give back a toy when asked
- Respond to singing or music