

What if my baby does have a hearing loss?

If your baby does have a hearing loss, there are many things that can be done to help. Hearing aids, cochlear implants, sign language and early intervention programs are all options. Professionals and other parents with experiences like yours will be there to support you and answer questions you have when you are deciding what is best for your family.

A local Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) will help you find services and support. If you have concerns about your baby's hearing, or other concerns about your child's development, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

The sooner you find out if your baby has a hearing loss, the sooner you can begin to help your baby learn to listen and develop language. Research shows that most children with hearing loss who are enrolled in early intervention before 6 months of age, have good speech, language, and listening skills.

How can I get more information before my appointment with the Pediatric Audiologist?

Your baby's doctor can answer many of the questions you may have.

Call the Washington State Department of Health at 1-888-WAEHDDI or email ehddi2@doh.wa.gov

The following websites are also an excellent source of information, support, and answers to questions you may have:

www.babyhearing.org
www.doh.wa.gov/EarlyHearingLoss/Family

Appointment information for your baby's hearing evaluation:

Date and Time

Place (Audiology Clinic)

Phone Number

Please call if you need to reschedule.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).

If Your Baby Is Referred for a Hearing Evaluation



No baby is too young for a hearing test...

Why does my baby's hearing need to be re-tested?

The results of the hearing test show that your baby may be at risk for hearing loss. However, more testing is needed to confirm whether or not your baby does have a hearing loss. About 3 in 1000 babies are born with a hearing loss.

How urgent is it to get re-tested?

It is important to find hearing problems as early as possible because a hearing loss can prevent your baby from learning speech and language. The sooner you find out about a hearing loss, the sooner you can help your baby.



What should I do now?

You should make an appointment with a Pediatric Audiologist (a hearing specialist) for a hearing test as soon as possible. Any of the Audiologists on the list given to you can provide these services. Your baby's doctor can help you with any referrals that are needed for your appointment.

Continue to talk with your baby as you normally would. Babies respond to the special speech and facial expressions that we reserve just for them. Lots of eye contact, touch, hugs and kisses help babies learn how to interact.



What can I do to get ready for my baby's hearing evaluation?

Your baby needs to be quiet and calm during the hearing test. To make sure your baby is resting during the appointment:

- Try not to let your baby nap before the appointment.
- Feed your baby just before testing.
- Bring a blanket, extra diapers, change of clothes, and formula.
- Try to schedule the appointment for a time when your baby is likely to sleep.



Does this mean my baby is deaf?

Not necessarily. There are a few reasons why a baby may need further testing. The most common reasons are:

- Middle ear fluid or infection
- A blocked ear canal
- A permanent hearing loss

If your baby has been referred for further hearing testing, it is also important to understand that there are different degrees of hearing loss. A hearing loss can range from mild to profound (deaf).

Babies with the most severe degrees of hearing loss will have difficulty hearing speech and even very loud sounds. Babies with the mildest degrees of hearing loss will respond to louder sounds. However, they will have difficulty hearing the softest sounds of speech.

The Pediatric Audiologist will do a complete hearing evaluation for your baby. If there is a hearing loss, your Audiologist will work with you to find out the degree of your baby's hearing loss.