

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING: INFANT HEARING ASSESSMENT

Location: 217 W. Cataldo, Spokane, WA 99201

Duration: 90 min

IT IS PREFERRED THAT YOUR BABY SLEEP DURING THE APPOINTMENT

This hearing assessment takes longer and is more detailed than the screening done in the hospital. It is very sensitive to any eye or muscle movements your baby makes, therefore, limited testing can be done if the baby is awake. It is best if your baby is kept awake and hungry prior to testing. Before the test starts the audiologist will put some sticky electrodes on your baby's forehead and ears. This process will sometimes wake a baby that is already sleeping. After the equipment is set up, your baby can eat and fall asleep. A nap of 20-45 minutes is usually enough time to complete the test.

Parents have found these steps helpful:

- **SLEEP DEPRIVATION** prior to the test
 - Keep your baby up later than normal the night before the test
 - Get your baby up early on the morning of the test
 - Try to skip naps
 - Try not to let your baby sleep on the drive to the clinic.
- Limit food for a couple of hours prior to the test. You will be able to feed your baby during the appointment.
- The age and disposition of your baby will affect the amount of sleep and food deprivation needed for the baby to sleep during the test. Use your own judgment when deciding how long to keep them awake and how long to withhold food.
- Due to limited space and need for silence, it is best if young siblings are not brought to the appointment. If you do not have childcare, we have movies siblings can watch in the room during the test.
- If you have twins, it is best to have a second adult available to keep the second twin in the waiting room awake while the first baby is tested.

Due to the long duration of testing, we ask that you make every effort to keep this appointment. If you need to reschedule testing, please give our office no less three days notice, so that other families can fill an appointment opening.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT INFANT HEARING ASSESSMENT:

Why is my baby's hearing being tested if they passed their hospital screening?

Some babies have medical histories that put them at higher risk of developing a change in hearing after discharge from the hospital. Your birthing hospital schedules follow-up testing for babies who have any of the risk indicators.

My baby did not pass the hospital screening. What will this test tell me?

This is a diagnostic test of your baby's hearing. That means that we can change our test sounds to find out how loud each pitch needs to be for your baby to hear it. We are also able to tell if our test was affected by an ear infection or fluid behind the eardrum.

What is the difference between the hospital screening and this test?

The hospital screening tests each ear's response to a single soft sound. The infant hearing assessment is more thorough and checks a range of soft speech sounds from low pitch to high pitch.

Why is it important to check my baby's hearing? They seem to hear fine.

We love hearing that your baby is responding to your voice and environmental sounds. A lot of times children with hearing loss can hear and respond to some sounds. However, being able to respond to a sound is different than being able to hear speech clearly enough to learn to speak. When hearing loss is not detected at a young age, it can affect your child's speech and language development, social and emotional health, and success in school. When hearing loss is detected at a young age, early intervention services, hearing aids, and speech therapy can help a child develop these vital skills.

What happens if my baby does not sleep at all during the appointment?

We have some screening tests that we can do while your baby is awake. Depending on our screening results and your baby's risk indicators for hearing loss, you and the audiologist can decide if repeat testing should be scheduled.

How often do babies have a permanent hearing loss?

Most studies show about three out of every 1,000 babies are born with permanent hearing loss. About three more out of 1,000 will develop a change in hearing before age five. To compare, about one out of 700 babies is born with Down syndrome.