



You will be in a comfortable chair with your baby for the duration of the test.

There are no supervised play areas in the hearing clinic. If you must bring other children with you, please bring another adult to look after them.

In most cases, the results of the test will be explained to you immediately after the test.

How parents can prepare their baby for re-screening or for diagnostic testing

Both re-screening and diagnostic hearing assessments are done while your baby sleeps. Please try to have your baby hungry and tired when you arrive for your appointment. That way you can feed your baby so he or she will fall asleep easily for testing. Here are some suggestions to help your baby sleep during testing:

- Keep your baby awake for at least an hour before the test.
- If driving to the appointment, have an extra adult in the car to play with your baby and keep the baby awake.
- Bring any special blankets or items that may help your baby to sleep.
- Please try to delay feeding your baby for about one and a half hours before the appointment.
- The best time to feed your baby is when the test begins.



For more information, contact your local public health audiology clinic, visit the BCEHP website at www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing or call 1-866-612-2347



Hearing Test Information for Parents



BC Early Hearing Program

A service of BC Children's Hospital and the Provincial Health Services Authority

Today _____
your baby _____
had a hearing screening.

**Your baby needs re-screening
or further diagnostic hearing
assessment.**

Early detection of hearing loss is very important. That is why your baby's hearing was checked soon after birth. Most babies who need further testing are found to have normal hearing, but some are found to have hearing loss.

It may take more than one appointment to work through the hearing assessments. This can be frustrating for parents. It is important to complete the testing in order to know the facts about your baby's hearing.



What type of tests are used?

The tests given to your baby will depend on whether your baby needs another screening or diagnostic assessment.

Rescreening

If your baby needs a second hearing screening, an Automated Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR) test or Automated Otoacoustic Emissions (AOAE) test will be used. Most re-screening uses the AABR test.

For AABR testing, soft headphones specially made for babies are used. The headphones are put over the baby's ears, and a series of clicking sounds are made. Three small sensors are placed on the baby's neck and head. Screening takes longer with the AABR test, usually about 30 minutes.

For AOAE testing, a small, soft-tipped earpiece is placed in the outer part of the baby's ear, and soft sounds are sent into the ear. When the ear receives the sound, the inner part, known as the cochlea, produces a response that can be measured. AOAE testing takes only a few minutes if a baby is quiet or asleep.

In both tests the hearing equipment shows how well the baby's ears respond to sound.

For more information and photos of these tests, go to the "For Families" section of the BCEHP website (www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing).

Diagnostic Hearing Assessment

For diagnostic assessment, the testing includes several in-depth checks on your baby's hearing. These tests are more complex than hearing screening tests. They help to develop a complete understanding of your baby's hearing. The diagnostic tests include an Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) test and an Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) test.

There are special infant assessment sites in each health authority where these tests are done. The testing is done by a BCEHP-trained audiologist who specializes in testing infant hearing.

The tests can take up to two hours. Sometimes it takes more than one appointment to accurately assess a baby's hearing.

Both types of tests are painless and will not harm your baby in any way. It is important to keep your test appointment and find out about your baby's hearing.

If the second screening test results are not clear, does that mean my baby likely has hearing loss?

If the second screening test results are not clear, it is more likely that your baby may have a hearing loss.

About one in 20 babies whose second screening test does not show clear responses has hearing loss in one or both ears.

What is the next step?

You will be called with details of the follow-up appointment within the next few weeks. The location of the test will be as close to your home as possible. Some parents find it hard to wait until they know the results of their baby's diagnostic testing. If you would like to talk with someone who has been through testing, please call the clinic that is arranging your baby's testing or the BCEHP Provincial Office toll-free at 1-866-612-2347.

Privacy Information

The BC Early Hearing Program (BCEHP) is a provincial early hearing detection and intervention program. It is a service of BC Children's Hospital and the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA).

How do I access the program?

Most families access the BCEHP soon after the birth of their baby at the time of hearing screening. If your baby is born in hospital, the screener obtains contact information, baby's date of birth, and personal health number from the hospital admission system. If your baby needs further testing after screening, the screener will review this and other information with you.

How is information about my baby shared?

To help us provide services to your family, the BCEHP may need to share information about your child with professionals who provide hearing, early communication and support services. These professionals may be in hospitals, hearing clinics, health units, child development centres and early intervention programs, for example.

Your child's personal information is collected under the authority of the *BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FIPPA") Section 26(c) and is used to deliver hearing assessment, early communication and support services. We also use the information to help us determine how well we meet families' needs, how we can improve our program and services, and how we can assure quality of care. Information may be used for research, with your consent or as the law permits.

For more information about the collecting and sharing of personal information by the BCEHP, visit our website www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing or contact the Program at #301-931 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K3; Phone 1-866-612-2347