

# Neonatal Hearing Screening

It is important to know your baby have good hearing



The first 2-3 years of a child's life is the most critical period for speech and language development. In fact, children start to learn speech and language in the first 6 months of life. Identification and intervention before age 6 months let hearing impaired children have a much better chance to develop normal speech and language. The late identification not only affects speech and language but also cognitive and social development of the infants.

A small number of babies are born with hearing loss. It is estimated that out of every 1000 live birth, 1-3 babies are born with various degree of hearing loss.

Some babies with congenital hearing loss are born with normal hearing parents. Only relying on family history or high risk registry could not identify all hearing loss children. Therefore neonatal hearing screening is important to all neonates. This screening allows those babies who have a hearing loss to be identified early and receive early intervention.

## Screening

The hearing screening test is usually started to do 30 or more hours after birth but before the baby is discharged and when the baby is sleeping or resting quietly. The screening test will be done with Automated Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR). The test is accurate, effective and non invasive. The test can help us to identify the baby who needs further hearing follow up.

## AABR

The test only takes about 10-15 minutes of a quiet or clam baby. It is a non-invasive test and does not hurt.

Sound will be delivered to the baby through an earmuff and the

responses will be picked up by the machine through the electrodes that placed on the baby's head and neck etc. The responses will be analyzed by the equipment and determined if the baby passes or needs to have a follow up test.



## Pass the hearing screening test:

This means that your baby is unlikely to have a hearing loss. However, hearing may not always remain the same over time. Hearing loss may develop later in childhood. After the hearing screening, we will provide you with a checklist for you to monitor your child's responses to sound and

speech and language development. Monitor your baby's responses to sound as well as speech and language development is very important. If you have any concerns about your child's hearing, please arrange to have your child's hearing tested.

**Does not pass the hearing screening test:**

If the baby's one or both ears did not have a strong response during the initial hearing screening test, it means that baby needs to be referred for a follow up hearing screening test. Don't worry. Sometimes it happens and does not necessarily mean your baby has a hearing loss. A screening test looks for signs of possible hearing loss. There may be other reasons to contribute this result apart from hearing loss. The baby needs to have a follow up for a repeat screening test to monitor the hearing status of the baby.

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