



Your baby's hearing screening

What if my baby does not receive a hearing screening prior to discharge?

Your baby may miss receiving a newborn hearing screen before you are discharged. If this happens, the hospital will give your details to Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS), who will then contact you to make an appointment to have your baby's hearing checked.

If it has been more than four weeks since your baby was discharged from hospital and a follow up hearing screen has not been arranged, please ring CaFHS on 1300 733 606, Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 4.30pm to arrange an appointment at your local CaFHS clinic.

What if I don't want to receive newborn hearing screening for my baby?

If you do not wish to have newborn hearing screening completed for your baby you need to inform your midwife or health care professional.

For more information

If you have any questions about the hearing screening program, or if you are anxious about your baby's screening results at any stage, further information and advice is available from:

**Newborn and Children's Hearing – the Universal Neonatal Hearing Screening Program, during business hours Monday to Friday
Telephone: (08) 8303 1585**

**Or you can view the Universal Neonatal Hearing Screening Program web page at:
www.cyh.sa.gov.au**

If you require this information in an alternative language or format please contact SA Health on the details provided above and they will make every effort to assist you.



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Information for parents
of newborn babies



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In the first few weeks of life your baby will have several routine health checks. One of these checks is a free newborn hearing screen.

Why screen my baby's hearing?

A small number of babies are born with a hearing impairment (the baby is unable to hear sounds normally). A simple hearing screen can help to identify this soon after birth.

Early identification of a hearing impairment is vital, especially for a child's speech and language development. Also parents can be given support and information sooner.

No-one in my family has a hearing impairment – does my baby still need to have a hearing screen?

Yes. It is important to screen all babies. For every 1,000 births in Australia per year, one to two babies are born with a hearing impairment, and for most of them there is no family history of hearing impairment.

When will the screening be done?

The hearing screen will be done within a few days of birth, usually before you leave the hospital or by the community midwife soon after you leave hospital.

Is the hearing screen painful?

No, it is not at all painful. It is usually done while your baby is resting quietly or asleep and most babies remain asleep through the screening process. It only takes a few minutes and you can stay with your baby while it is being done.

What does the hearing screen involve?

The screen will be done in a quiet place and your baby needs to be settled and quiet.

The midwife or designated screener will place a headphone over the outer part of your baby's ear. The machine sends a clicking sound down the ear canal and the sensors detect how the hearing nerve responds to those sounds.

If your baby has a PASS result from the hearing screen

The results of a hearing screen give a good indication of your baby's hearing at the time of the screen. However, it is possible for a child to develop hearing loss later because of a middle ear infection, inherited conditions, or other infections and illnesses.

If your baby is at risk of developing a hearing loss, your baby may be recommended to have a hearing test with an audiologist around their first birthday.

If you are ever concerned about your child's hearing, talk to your doctor or community Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) nurse.



If your baby has a REFER result from the hearing screen

Your baby may refer on the first newborn hearing screen because:

- > Your baby's ears were still too moist to respond to the screening. It can take a few days for this moisture to dry.
- > There was some matter which entered the ear canal during birth. This is common and it will clear with time.
- > Your baby may have a hearing loss.

Statistics show that for every 1,000 babies born in Australia each year, one to two babies are born with a significant, permanent hearing impairment so it is important that a second hearing screen is completed, when a baby does refer. Your baby's second hearing screen will be followed up in the community by a CaFHS nurse.

What else happens to the results?

You will be given the results of the screen immediately and they will be discussed with you.

The results of the screen will be sent to SA Pathology, who manage neonatal screening data. All personal health information is confidential.