Hearing screening for your baby

Alberta's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program is a province-wide service that identifies permanent hearing loss as early as possible in a baby's life.

Our services include:

- Screening babies for hearing loss by 1 month of age
- Diagnosing permanent hearing loss by 3 months of age
- Ensuring access to intervention by 6 months of age

Babies are never too young to have their hearing checked (screened)

Permanent hearing loss is one of the most common conditions in newborns. Even though a baby may respond to sounds, they may not hear well enough to develop speech and language.

Having your baby's hearing screened soon after they are born is the best way to find hearing loss early and get the support needed to help your baby build speech, language and learning skills.

How is hearing screening done?

While your baby is quiet or sleeping, soft sounds are played into your baby's ears and a computer measures how your baby is hearing sound.

Hearing screening is quick, safe and won't hurt your baby.

When is hearing screening done?

It's done soon after birth, either before your baby is discharged from the hospital or at a community screening site.

When will I get the results?

You will get the results as soon as the screening is done. The result of the test is pass or refer.

What does a pass result mean?

It means that your baby is hearing well on the day of the screening. It is a good idea to monitor your baby's hearing, even after a pass result, using the checklist on the back of this handout.

What happens if my baby doesn't pass the hearing screening (refer result)?

Your baby will need to go for a more specialized hearing test to confirm or rule out hearing loss. Most babies who need further testing are found to have normal hearing, but some are found to have hearing loss. This test is done by a pediatric audiologist (a health care provider who specializes in children's hearing).

Learn more at AHS.ca/ehdi or by calling Health Link at 811.

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Alberta Health Services

Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program