

Healthy Hearing is critical to your child's speech and language development from the earliest months of life.

My baby passed the hearing screen. Why do they need another hearing test?

Your baby has one or more risk factors that may increase their chance of developing a hearing loss as they get older. These risk factors include:

- family history of permanent hearing loss. This means parents or siblings who have had a hearing loss since early childhood;
- syndromes related to hearing loss;
- exposure to infections at birth;
- assisted ventilation for more than 5 days after birth;
- birth weight below 1500 grams;
- severe difficulties breathing at birth;
- head or facial structural problems (e.g. cleft palate);
- severe jaundice.

Even though only a small number of babies with these risk factors will actually develop a hearing loss, it is still important to have your baby's hearing tested by an Audiologist when they are a little older.

What is an Audiologist and when do they recommend my baby's follow-up hearing test?

An Audiologist is a hearing specialist who has skills and equipment for carrying out detailed hearing testing (diagnostic hearing tests).

They will want to test your baby's hearing sometime between 6 and 12 months of age, depending on your baby's specific needs.

If you are concerned about your baby's hearing before the appointment, you can call your baby's Audiologist to ask for an earlier appointment.

What will happen during the diagnostic hearing tests?

The Audiologist will complete a number of different hearing tests which check different parts of your baby's hearing system. They will explain each test and the results on the day of the appointment.

The diagnostic hearing test will confirm whether your child's hearing is within normal hearing limits or if they have developed a hearing loss.



It is not uncommon for a baby to need more than one appointment before full results are available.

How will you know if I hear you?

How much will the hearing tests cost?

Queensland Health audiology services are free and available to all babies, regardless of whether they were born in a public or a private hospital. If you choose to go to a private Audiologist, we suggest you discuss costs with them before your baby's appointment.

Your screener will provide you with details of both public and private audiologists in your area.

What if my baby has a hearing loss?

If your baby has a **temporary hearing loss** your Audiologist will want to see your baby again to confirm that the temporary hearing loss has gone away. If it does not go away, your Audiologist will recommend that your baby sees an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist.

If your baby has a **permanent hearing loss** your Audiologist will discuss different processes and options available, plus link you in to the Queensland Hearing Loss Family Support Service (QLHFSS). The QLHFSS will be able to help you connect with a range of different services relevant to the specific needs of your child.

My baby seems to be responding to sound. Do they still need the diagnostic hearing tests?

Most babies who have a hearing loss will hear and respond to some sounds. Therefore, picking up hearing loss is impossible without using proper testing equipment.

Picking up a hearing loss at an early stage, provides the best opportunity to assist your child's speech and language development. This is important for your child's future learning, social, and emotional well-being.

Hearing and Speech Checklist

This list can help you monitor your baby's hearing

Birth to 3 months

- Settles to familiar sounds or voices
- Is startled by or jumps when there is a sudden noise

3 to 6 months

- Turns head or eyes towards interesting sounds
- Appears to listen
- Wakes easily to sound
- Starts to make speech-like sounds

6 to 12 months

- Understands simple words such as 'no' and 'bye-bye'
- Begins to copy speech sounds
- Turns head to soft sounds

12 to 18 months

- Appears to understand more words each week
- When asked, points to people, body parts or toys
- Follows simple spoken instructions i.e. 'sit down'
- Says two to three real words i.e. 'ball', 'dog', 'car'

A child's hearing can be tested at any age.

If you do not have a current referral to an audiologist and are concerned about your baby's hearing, ask your baby's doctor or local clinic staff for a referral to an Audiologist to have your child's hearing tested.

How do I make an Audiology Appointment?

The audiologist will contact you to arrange a time to test your baby's hearing. Depending on your baby's specific needs, they will want to test your baby's hearing sometime between 6 to 12 months of age.

If you are unable to attend the appointment please notify your Audiologist.

Audiology Appointment

Audiology Service:

Address:.....

.....

Telephone Number:

Contact Person:

Date:

Time:

If you change your contact details or address please let the Audiology service listed above know. So they can contact you to arrange a time to test your baby's hearing.

If you do not hear from your Audiologist by the time your baby turns one, it is recommended that you contact your Audiologist to organise an appointment.

If you move to another town or city please call the above number and they will be able to advise you of an Audiology service closer to you.



Your Baby's Follow Up Hearing Test

A child's hearing can change over time.

This brochure explains why it is important for some babies to have their hearing tested again by their 1st Birthday

