

Preparing for Your Baby's Audiology Appointment

Minnesota Newborn
Screening Program



Your baby's audiology appointment

Date (MM/DD/YYYY):

Time (AM/PM):

Clinic Name:

Clinic Phone:

What is an audiologist?

An audiologist is a healthcare professional who is trained to diagnose and manage hearing loss in newborns, children, and adults. Someone with hearing loss may be able to hear some sounds while others may hear nothing at all. There are different types of hearing loss based on the specific problem with one or more parts of the ear(s). Complete assessment of both the type and severity of hearing loss by an experienced pediatric audiologist is important to ensure the most accurate plan for follow-up and management of the hearing loss.

Why is my baby seeing an audiologist?

The hearing testing that your baby received at birth/ shortly after birth was a screening test. If a baby does not pass the screening test, it tells us that they need to have further testing by an audiologist. A complete evaluation by an audiologist is the only way to know for sure that your baby is hearing all the sounds important for speech and language development.

How long will the appointment take?

Appointments can take 1-3 hours. Sometimes it is not always possible to finish a hearing test in one appointment. If a second appointment is needed, it will be scheduled as soon as possible.

What should I bring with me to my baby's appointment?

- Your insurance card
- A referral if needed
- A current list of medications
- Prior hearing test results and/or evaluations
- Details about any family history of childhood hearing loss
- Names/addresses of individuals where you might want the report sent

What do I need to do before the appointment?

The tests are most easily done when your baby is sleeping. To ensure that your baby is asleep during the testing:

- Do not let your baby nap before the appointment or during the car ride to the clinic.
- Avoid feeding your baby right before the appointment. You will be able to feed your baby at the clinic just before the test.



What will happen during the audiology appointment?

The audiologist will collect information about your baby's medical history, about your pregnancy/labor/delivery with this child, and about family history.

While your baby is sleeping, the audiologist will examine your baby's ears and perform the hearing evaluation. The type of testing performed may include:

- **Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)**—Sensors will be placed on your baby's forehead and earlobes to measure the brain's response to sounds. Earphones will be placed on each ear to deliver the test sounds. Your baby will not physically respond to the sounds, but the sensors will be able to measure how well your baby is responding to the various sounds. This test helps determine if any hearing loss is present. If hearing loss is present, it can provide information on what type of hearing loss it is.
- **Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE)**—A soft rubber tip will be placed at each ear to deliver soft sounds and to measure for an echo that occurs when the ear is functioning normally. This test is usually used in combination with other tests to provide the most accurate diagnosis.
- **Tympanometry**—A soft rubber tip will be placed at each ear that measures how well the eardrum moves. This test, when used in combination with other tests, can provide some clues about the possible cause of hearing loss.

Will my baby feel any pain?

Your baby will not feel any pain at any point during the testing. Placement of the soft rubber tips and sensors will not harm your baby. Most babies will fuss and wiggle when test equipment is first placed but will calm when held close and swaddled.



Will I get the results of the testing right away?

The audiologist will be able to tell you when the test results will be available and who will be giving you the results. If there are questions about the results, you should contact the audiology clinic.

What if my baby does not sleep through the entire test?

The younger your baby is, the more likely they will sleep through the test, but sometimes an additional appointment is needed. For some older babies, sedation may be recommended by your baby's doctor to help them sleep during the entire time needed for a complete evaluation. To decrease the likelihood of sedation, it is recommended that you make appointments as soon as possible.

What if something comes up, and I need to reschedule my baby's appointment?

It is very important that your baby sees an audiologist. If you cannot make your scheduled appointment, please reschedule the hearing test right away.