

What if my baby did not have a hearing screening?

Many community hospitals and audiology facilities offer hearing screenings on an out-patient basis. Please discuss where to go for a screening with your primary care provider (PCP) or contact the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program at the Vermont Department of Health.

How do we get a repeat hearing screening?

- The hospital may rescreen your baby's hearing prior to discharge.
- The hospital may schedule a repeat screening as an outpatient.
- The hospital may refer you to an audiologist.

Why do babies need to have another hearing test if they pass at birth?

Babies can develop hearing loss later in childhood. Below is a list of common reasons throughout childhood to ask for another hearing test.

- Parent or caregiver concern about hearing or speech and language development
- Family history of permanent hearing loss in childhood
- An infection present at birth
- Problems of the head, face, ears or neck
- Medications given at birth
- Syndromes associated with hearing loss
- Admission to the neonatal intensive care unit
- Prematurity (less than 37 weeks)

For more information, contact the VTEHDI Program.

Call: 1-800-537-0076 or
1-802-651-1872

E-mail: VTEHDI@VDH.state.vt.us

Visit: healthvermont.gov

Follow the links for Hearing Health under Children & Families




Division of Maternal and Child Health
Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program
108 Cherry Street
PO Box 70
Burlington, Vermont 05402
healthvermont.gov

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Can my baby
hear?

Information for families about

**NEWBORN
HEARING SCREENING**

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Vermont Department of Health
Division of Maternal and Child Health

Why should ALL newborns have a hearing screening at birth?

Babies begin developing speech and language from the moment they are born. When sounds and voices can't be heard, language learning is delayed. Hearing loss is easily missed in the early years of life. Many parents think they would be able to tell if their baby could not hear. This is not always the case. Babies respond to noise by startling or turning their heads towards sound. This does not mean they have normal hearing.

About three babies in every 1,000 have some degree of hearing loss. Only half of children with hearing loss have a known family history of hearing problems or other risk factors for hearing loss. The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, National Institute of Health, Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, and United States Department of Health and Human Services recommend that all newborns be screened.

Newborn hearing screening can detect possible hearing loss in the first days of life. If a baby does not pass the first screening, further testing will be needed. If a hearing loss is found, early intervention can start right away.

What is hearing loss?

Hearing loss is the decreased ability to hear sounds in one or both ears. The loss can be mild to profound, temporary or permanent, and makes it difficult to hear all the different sounds needed to learn how to talk. Babies with any degree of hearing loss will have the best chance for normal speech and language development if they are diagnosed by 3 months of age and enrolled in early intervention by 6 months of age.

How will they screen my baby's hearing?

The two types of screening tests are automated auditory brainstem response (AABR) and otoacoustic emissions (OAE). Sounds (clicks or tones) are presented through small earphones and the responses are counted and averaged.

AABR measures how the brain responds to sound. OAE measures sound waves produced in the inner ear.

Both procedures are quick, painless, and may be done while your baby is sleeping or lying still. Either or both tests may be used.

Who will screen my baby's hearing?

Newborn hearing screening can be done by nurses, trained technicians, or audiologists (hearing specialists).

When will my baby have a hearing screening?

A hearing screening should be offered to you prior to discharge from the hospital. Most hospitals will screen a baby's hearing after they are 12–24 hours old.

Vermont's goal is to screen all newborns' hearing prior to discharge from the hospital or by 1 month of age.

The results of your baby's hearing screening will be sent to the Vermont Department of Health and the health department in your state of residence.

What are the possible results of a newborn hearing screening?

A **PASS** result means your baby's hearing screening was normal at that time.

A **REFER** result means your baby did not pass the hearing screening in one or both ears. This does not mean that your baby has permanent hearing loss, but a repeat hearing screening is needed.

Incomplete or Attempted; No Results Available indicate that the screening had to be stopped and another screening is needed, usually due to the baby's activity or to equipment problems.