

*“Parents are important partners. They have the greatest impact upon their young child and their active participation is crucial.”* - Mark Ross (1975)

# Universal Newborn HEARING SCREENING

Your baby has **referred** for another Hearing Screening or Diagnostic Hearing Test

- Your baby needs another hearing screening
  - Your baby needs a diagnostic hearing test
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## **Today your baby had a newborn hearing screening and has referred for further screening or diagnostic testing through the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) Program**

This can mean your baby has a hearing loss. Other reasons for referring might be:

- fluid in the baby's ear
- noise in the room during the screening
- baby was fussy

### **My baby seems to be responding to sounds. Is another screening really necessary?**

Yes, babies who have a hearing loss might react to some sounds. Screening/testing is the only way to know if your baby has a hearing loss. It is very important to find out as soon as possible.

### **Your baby needs another hearing screening: what happens next?**

Another hearing screening appointment will be scheduled for your baby within the first month.

### **What happens during the next hearing screening?**

A UNHS hearing screener will perform a hearing screening on your baby's ears in the hospital or in a community-based setting. The screening is fast and safe. Soft-level sounds are played into your baby's ears using a soft ear tip. The screening works best when your baby is quiet and sleeping. You can feed or hold your baby during the screening.

If your baby passes this screening no further testing is needed.

If your baby refers for diagnostic testing you will be contacted for an appointment to see an Audiologist.

Your health care professional may ask you about your baby's screening results. If your baby refers after the outpatient screening, your doctor or health care professional may suggest other tests as well, such as testing for CMV, a virus that sometimes causes hearing loss.

### **Preparing your baby for a hearing screening or diagnostic hearing test**

We will get the most accurate results if your baby is sound asleep during the test.

### **Before the test:**

- keep your baby awake
- prepare to feed your baby during testing
- bring a comfortable, warm blanket
- have extra diapers

## **Your baby has referred for a diagnostic hearing test - what happens next?**

A diagnostic hearing test will be scheduled for your baby with an Audiologist. An Audiologist is a specialist who identifies and supports children with hearing loss.

Be sure to keep this appointment because finding and managing hearing loss early in life is important.

### **What happens during the diagnostic hearing test?**

While your baby is sleeping, Audiologists will do a range of diagnostic tests to check different parts of the ear. Tests are similar to the earlier screening but take longer. Be prepared to stay for 1-3 hours. Your baby's responses to a range of tones are measured. We hear this full range of tones when people speak.

### **What happens if my baby has a hearing loss?**

The Audiologist will explain the type of hearing loss and the sounds the baby will be able to hear and not hear and how this could affect speech and language development. They will arrange for treatment and other services.

## Things you can do that babies like:

- Get down to their level so they can see your face. This tells them you are interested in what they are doing and saying. It makes it easier for them to connect and interact with you.
- Repeat the sounds they make. Babies enjoy making noises, and they like it when you repeat their noises over and over.
- Sing and laugh, especially when you are feeding, bathing and changing their diapers. Remember to talk to your baby all through the day about things you do and see - "Mommy's putting on her coat." "That's a big truck."
- Tell them the names of things they are looking at and playing with. Babies like exploring and learning about new things. They also like hearing what these things are called.

## Things you can do that toddlers (ages 1 to 3) like:

- Let them touch and hold books while you point to pages and name the pictures.
- Use real words instead of "baby talk" - "give me" instead of tata, "water" instead of wawa.
- Take time to listen to them - they want you to hear all their new sounds, words and ideas.
- Give them simple directions to follow - "Go find your red boots."
- Use lots of different words when you talk to them - opposite words like up/down, in/out; action words like "running," "splashing," and words that describe things like "happy," "big," "little," "clean," or "dirty."
- Encourage them to play with other children - at the library, in play groups and at the park.

# Speech, Language and Hearing Milestones

Here are some signs you can watch for to see if your child is hearing normally. If your child is not responding to the signs listed below, for a child his or her age, you should let your child's health care provider or audiologist know.

## Birth to 3 months, does the child:

- make cooing sounds
- have different cries for different needs
- smile at you
- startle to loud sounds
- soothe/calm to a familiar voice

## 4 to 6 months, does the child:

- babble and make different sounds
- make sounds back when you talk
- enjoy games like peek-a-boo
- turn his/her eyes toward a sound source
- respond to music or toys that make noise

## 7 to 12 months, does the child:

- wave hi/bye
- respond to his/her name
- let you know what he/she wants using sounds, and/or actions like pointing
- begin to follow simple directions (e.g., Where is your nose?)
- localize correctly to sound by turning his/her head toward the sound
- pay attention when spoken to

## 12 to 18 months, does the child:

- use common words and start to put words together
- enjoy listening to storybooks
- point to body parts or pictures in a book when asked
- look at your face when talking to you

## 18 to 24 months, does the child:

- understand more words than he/she can say
- say two words together (e.g., More juice)
- ask simple questions (e.g., What's that?)
- take turns in a conversation

## 2 to 3 years, does the child:

- use sentences of three or more words most of the time
- understand different concepts (e.g., in-on; up-down)
- follow two-part directions (e.g., take the book and put it on the table)
- answer simple questions (e.g., Where is the car?)
- participate in short conversations

## 3 to 4 years, does the child:

- tell a short story or talk about daily activities
- talk in sentences with adult-like grammar
- generally speak clearly so people understand
- hear you when you call from another room
- listen to TV at the same volume as others
- answer a variety of questions

## 4 to 5 years, does the child:

- pronounce most speech sounds correctly
- participate in and understand conversations even in the presence of background noise
- recognize familiar signs (e.g., stop sign)
- make up rhymes
- hear and understand most of what is said at home and school
- listen to and retell a story and ask and answer questions about a story

## Where can I go for more information?

For more information on UNHS and on age-appropriate responses to language and sound, go to [www.gov.mb.ca/health/unhs](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/unhs)