

How can I get more information before my appointment with the pediatric audiologist?

Your baby's doctor can answer many of the questions you may have.

This Web site is also a source of useful information, support, and provides answers to questions you may have:

<http://www.babyhearing.org>

Questions?

Call 206-598-4022

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. The UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time –

Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Center, Audiology Division:
206-598-4022

Patient Education

Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Center, Audiology Division



Diagnostic Hearing Screening Evaluation

When your baby is referred for more testing

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Why does my baby's hearing need to be re-tested?

The results of the hearing screening show that your baby may be at risk for hearing loss. More testing is needed to confirm whether or not your baby does have a hearing loss. About 3 in 1,000 babies are born with a hearing loss. A hearing loss can prevent your baby from learning speech and language. The sooner you find out about a hearing loss, the sooner the treatment needed can help your baby. Early diagnosis can help.

Does this mean my baby is deaf?

Not necessarily. The most common reasons why a baby may be referred for further testing are:

- Middle ear fluid or infection.
- An ear canal blocked with debris.
- A permanent hearing loss.

There are degrees of hearing loss. A hearing loss can range from mild to profound (deaf).

- Babies with the mildest degrees of hearing loss will respond to you when you talk with them. They will also respond to louder sounds. However, they will have difficulty hearing the softest sounds of speech.

- Babies with the most severe degrees of hearing loss will have difficulty hearing speech and even very loud sounds. However, they will respond to you when you talk with them face-to-face.

The pediatric audiologist will do a complete diagnostic evaluation of your baby's hearing. If there is a hearing loss, your audiologist will work with you to pinpoint the extent of your baby's usable hearing. The audiologist will provide information about options to help make the most of early language learning opportunities.

What if my baby does have a hearing loss?

If your baby does have a hearing loss, there are many things that can be done to help. Assistive technology options such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, communication methods, and early intervention programs can help you and your baby enjoy rich conversations with each other.

Professionals and other parents with experiences like yours will be there to support you through the decision making process. If your baby has a hearing loss, the audiologist will help you obtain the services you and your baby may need.

The sooner you find out if your baby has a hearing loss, the sooner you can

begin to help your baby learn to listen and develop language. Research shows that most children with hearing loss, whose families receive appropriate services before 6 months of age, are able to develop language normally.

What should I do now?

Make an appointment with a pediatric audiologist for a diagnostic hearing evaluation as soon as possible. Any of the audiologists on the list given to you can provide these services. Your baby's doctor can help you with referrals that are needed for your appointment.

Keep communicating with your baby as you normally would. Babies respond to the special intonation patterns and facial expressions that we reserve just for them.

Lots of eye contact, touch, hugs, and kisses help babies learn how to interact. Face-to-face conversations are good for all babies, but are especially important when a hearing loss is suspected. Talk to your baby as you normally would – you'll find that your baby takes delight in these conversations with you.

Having fun with your baby will help him or her feel secure and learn how to communicate with people well.