A baby may look healthy but be born with a hearing problem.

Helps identify babies at risk for hearing loss. If found early, babies can be referred for additional testing.

Hearing screen process

Before a baby leaves the hospital, a health care provider places a soft earphone in the baby’s ear that plays sounds. This checks how the baby’s ear and brain respond to sound.

If there are signs of hearing loss in one or both ears, the baby needs more tests. The baby needs to be tested at least 2 more times in the first month after birth.

All hearing screening results should be reported to the baby’s provider.

Positive screen:

- Provider should follow up with the baby’s family.
- Provider refers the baby to a pediatric audiologist to evaluate the baby for permanent hearing loss before the baby is 3 months old.
- If the baby has hearing loss, provider refers the baby to an early intervention program before the baby is 6 months old.

Negative screen:

- Baby is released from the hospital and no additional testing is needed.

Follow-up

Lab results

Three simple screens

1. Blood screen
2. Hearing screen
3. Heart screen

All babies in the United States receive newborn screening. Each state decides which conditions to screen for.