

Fast Facts for Families and Partners about Newborn Hearing Screening



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

What is newborn hearing screening?

- Most states require newborns be screened for hearing loss to prevent speech and language problems.

Why should my baby's hearing be screened?

- One out of every 300 infants has a permanent hearing loss.
- Over ½ of the infants with hearing loss are healthy and have no family history of hearing loss.
- Children identified with hearing loss after six months of age can have delays in speech and language.

How will my baby's screening be done?

- There are two types of hearing screening test...
 - 1) The Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) tests the infant's ability to hear soft sounds through miniature earphones. Sensors measure your baby's brainwaves to determine if the sounds are heard normally.
 - 2) Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) are measured directly with a miniature microphone and sent to a special computer to determine your baby's hearing status. Both tests are very safe and take only minutes.
- Test results are reported to your baby's doctor and to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
- The screening results are reported to the birth hospital or primary care physician.

What if my baby does not pass the screen?

- There are many reasons a baby may not pass a hearing screen. The baby could have been too active or too awake. It is important to follow your doctor's or your hospital's recommendation for a follow-up rescreen. Often the rescreen is done at your hospital when your baby is one or two weeks old.
- If your baby does not pass the rescreen, it is important to see an audiologist who has experience testing hearing in tiny babies.

What if my baby passes the hearing screen?

- Hearing loss can happen at any time. It is important to have your baby's hearing checked every year until he or she is in school. If you have any concerns about your baby's hearing, speech or language, you should immediately talk to your baby's doctor to obtain a referral to an audiologist.

How much does the newborn hearing screening cost?

- Hospitals vary in what they charge, but most insurance companies, including Medicaid, cover the screening cost.

Where can I get more information about newborn hearing screening?

- You can call the newborn Hearing Program at 303 692-2370 or visit our website at <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ps/hcp/hearing/index.html>.

**Health Care Program for Children with Special Needs (HCP)
Prevention Services Division ~ Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment**

**303 692-2370 or 1 800 886-7689 and Fax: 303 753-9249
www.hcpcolorado.com with links to Regional HCP offices throughout Colorado**