

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD'S HEARING BE TESTED?

Most babies have their hearing screened in the hospital shortly after birth. If your baby's hearing was not tested, your pediatrician should refer him/her for a newborn hearing screening as soon as possible. Early detection of hearing loss is very important to a child's development of spoken language; the most critical period for acquiring language is from birth to 3 years of age. Early



management of hearing loss is essential not only to a child's speech and language development, but also to his/her social and academic development. Some hearing problems are temporary and can be improved with medical treatment. Those that are permanent may require the use of hearing aids and enrollment in an early education program to optimize learning and language development.

Even though your baby had a newborn hearing screening, his/her hearing can be re-tested whenever there are concerns. Listed below are some concerns you might have for your child's listening or development.

Babies...

- Your baby does not startle or jump to loud sounds
- Your baby does not stop sucking or crying when there is a new sound
- Your 3-month-old baby does not coo at times, calm, or make eye contact when spoken to
- Your 9-month-old does not turn toward you when called from behind or make babbling sounds, such as "baba"
- Your 1-year-old does not babble using a variety of consonant sounds (g,m,n,b,d)

Toddlers...

- Your 18-month-old does not use single words to express his or her wants
- Your 2-year-old does not repeat words or phrases and does not use short phrases when talking
- Your child uses gestures to communicate

Children...

- Your 4-year-old's speech is difficult for most people to understand
- Your child often asks for things to be repeated
- Your child seems to watch your face closely when you talk

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- Your child seems inattentive at home or school
- Your child does not communicate as well as other children the same age
- Your child often responds to a question with an unrelated answer
- Your child prefers the TV or radio louder than others in your family
- Your child responds inconsistently to sound

Children who have had many ear infections or who have other risk factors for hearing loss should also have their hearing tested.