



Your baby's visit to the Audiology Clinic

Information for parents from the Newborn Hearing Screening Service

We have determined that your baby needs more hearing tests. This is because either:

- their hearing screening did not show a clear response in one or both ears, or
- their hearing screening was not appropriate. This could be due to medical factors that may increase the risk of your baby having a hearing loss.

It is important that your baby comes to their appointment at the clinic. The younger your baby is, the more settled they will be during their test. This will help the audiologist provide you with better information about your baby's hearing.

What will happen at my baby's appointment?

An audiologist will see your baby in a hospital clinic. An audiologist is a healthcare professional who specialises in hearing tests. They will explain the tests and answer any questions that you may have.

You will stay with your baby at all times during their hearing test. You may find it helpful to bring another adult with you to help with your baby's needs during their appointment.

What hearing tests will my baby have?

Your baby will have an otoacoustic emission (OAE) test or an auditory brainstem response (ABR) test. The audiologist will use the OAE or the ABR, or both tests.

- The **otoacoustic emission (OAE) test** involves putting a small soft tipped earpiece in the outer part of your baby's ear. The earpiece sends clicking sounds down their ear canal, this travels to the inner ear known as the cochlea. The cochlea produces a response, which is recorded by the OAE machine.
- The **auditory brain stem response (ABR) test** looks at how your baby's auditory or hearing nerve works. The ABR test involves placing a small sensor on your baby's forehead and behind their ears. A soft earpiece is then placed in their outer ear, or a headphone is used to cover their ears. Sounds at different frequencies are then played in your baby's ears. A computer (laptop) records your baby's response, so the audiologist can measure how well your baby's ears respond.

Why is it better if my baby is asleep for the procedure?

It is easier to perform the ABR test when your baby is asleep. When they are asleep there is little or no interference due to the movement of their arms and legs. As most babies of this age sleep most of the day, we do not foresee any problems with your baby settling to sleep.

What should I bring to our appointment?

- Please bring your baby's food to make sure a feed is available during the appointment, even if it is not near a feed time.
- Bring spare nappies in case your baby needs their nappy changed during their appointment.

Will the tests be uncomfortable?

No, these tests are not uncomfortable for your baby.

How long will we be in hospital for?

The test will usually take at least one hour to complete, if an ABR test is done as well. This includes time to settle your baby to sleep. If your baby is unsettled or more testing is needed, it might not be possible to complete the test on the day. If this happens, the audiologist will arrange another appointment for the test to be completed.

When will we receive the results?

The audiologist will give you the result and what it means, once the test is completed. For some, this is at the first appointment, for others, it may be at their second or third appointment.

Following the appointment, a letter is sent to you, your GP, your baby's health visitor, and other professionals if indicated.

Can I bring other children with me to the appointment?

The hearing test is done in a quiet environment. If you are bringing other children to the appointment, please also bring someone to look after those children in the waiting area during your baby's hearing test.

What if I have any questions or concerns about the test?

Please contact either the Audiology Department or the Newborn Hearing Screening Team if you have any questions, concerns, or issues with your appointment.

- **Audiology Department**
Telephone: 01227 864252 (lines are open 10am to 12pm, and 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday)
- **Newborn Hearing Screening Service**
Telephone: 01227 868740

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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