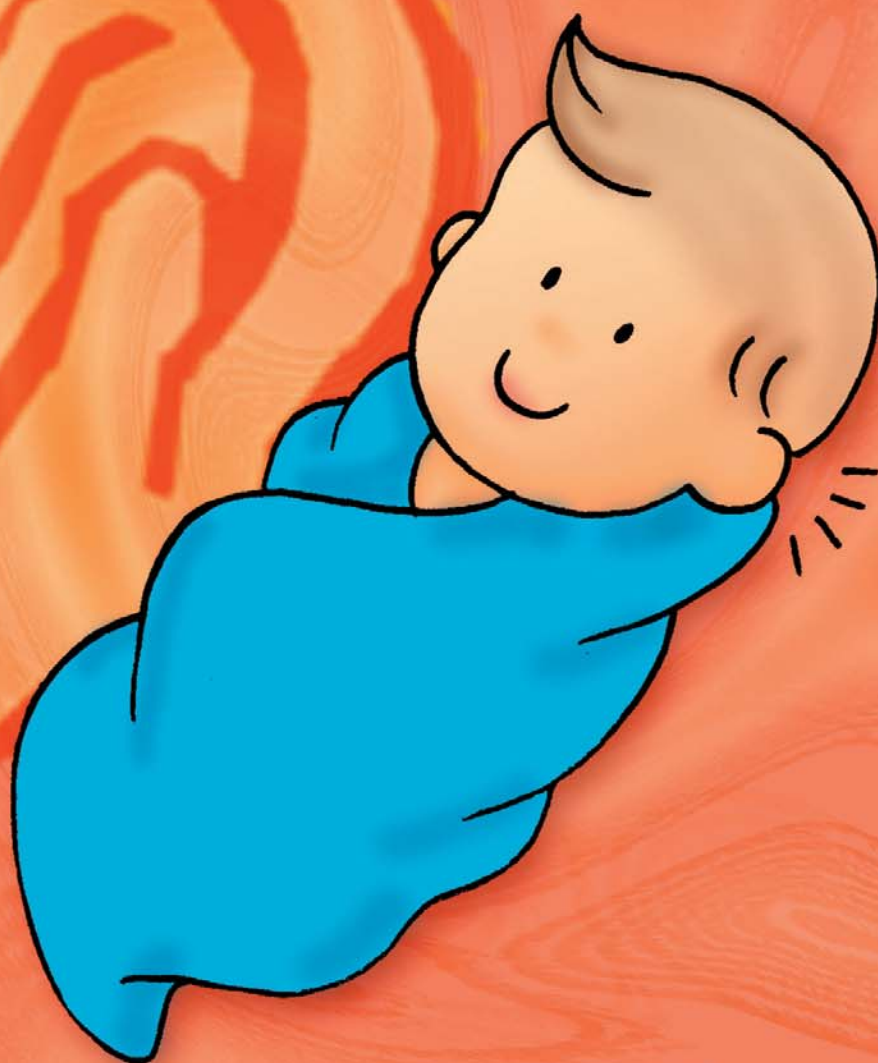


Information for Parents-to-be and

Parents of newborn babies:

Hearing Screening for Newborn: Oto-Acoustic Emission (OAE) Test



Online Version



FAMILY HEALTH SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Your baby will receive routine health checks during the first few weeks of life at our Maternal & Child Health Centre (MCHC). These include hearing screening by means of a quick and simple test, the OAE test, to check his / her hearing.



Why screen my baby's hearing?

It is not easy to detect hearing loss in a young baby. The hearing screening test will allow babies who have a hearing loss to be identified early. Appropriate intervention and training are important for the child's development. This also facilitates information and support to be given to parents at an early stage.

No one in my family has a hearing loss. Does my baby still need to have the screening test?

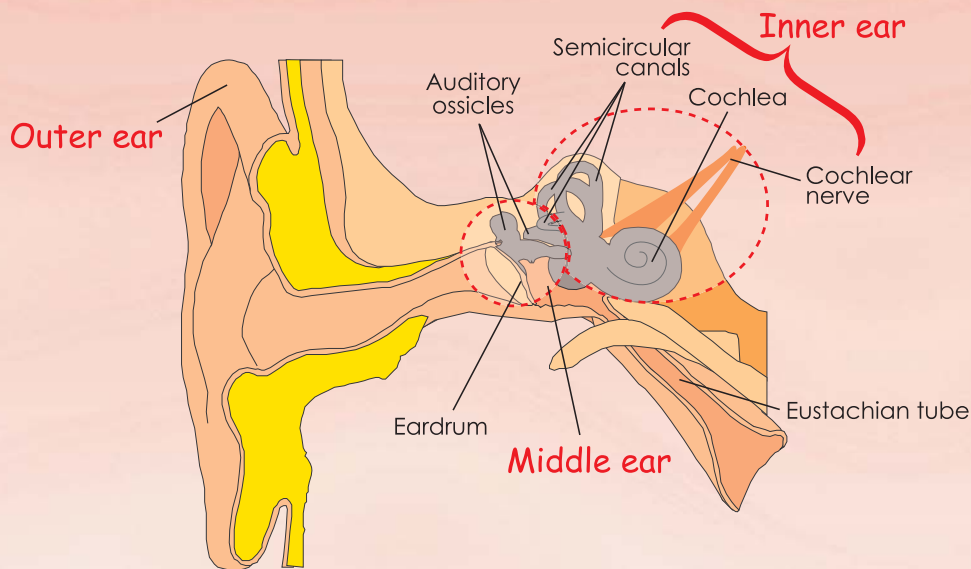
YES. It is important to screen all babies. About 1 baby in 1,000 is born with a hearing loss. Most of these babies are born in families with no history of hearing loss.

When should my child take the OAE Test?

OAE test in MCHCs is offered to babies aged between **2 weeks and 4 months** and who have not received any newborn hearing screening test before. From our experience, it is easier to do the test in babies before one month of age as they are more likely to cooperate. Therefore, parents are encouraged to make an appointment for the test at a nearby MCHC as soon as their babies are discharged from the birthing hospital.

What does the OAE Test involve?

A trained nurse carries out the test in a quiet room. She places a small soft-tipped earpiece in the outer part of your baby's ear, which sends clicking sounds down the ear. This will not cause any harm or pain. When an ear receives the sound, the inner part, known as the cochlea, usually produces an echo. Using an automated machine, the nurse can see how your baby's ears respond to the sound. Each ear is tested in turn. The test takes about 5 to 10 minutes.



The nurse will explain the results of the OAE test to you after the test is completed:

"Not passing the test"—What does it mean?

If your baby cannot pass the first test, we will arrange a second test. If your baby cannot pass both tests, this does not necessarily mean that your baby has a hearing loss. This only means that your baby requires further tests by an audiologist (specialist) to give you better information about your baby's hearing.

We will refer your baby to the specialist clinic. Please attend the appointment as scheduled. Although most babies tested at the audiology clinic are found to be normal, a small percentage of babies are found to have hearing loss, and early identification is very important.

"Passing the OAE Test"—What does it mean?

Passing the OAE test means that your baby is unlikely to have a hearing loss*. However, you are encouraged to pay attention to your baby's hearing behaviour. You may refer to the leaflet "[Can your baby hear you?](#)". If you have any concerns about your child's hearing at any time, please do not hesitate to let us know or consult your own doctor.

** Like other screening tests, OAE test may not be able to pick out a small proportion of babies with hearing loss. Besides, some babies will develop progressive hearing loss later on. Therefore, you should continue to observe your baby's hearing behaviour.*

Please come to a nearby MCHC to make the following OAE appointment:

Your Baby's Name:

MCHC No.:

First OAE Test

Second OAE Test





Date: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Time: _____

What can I do to prepare my baby for the OAE test?

-  The test is easier to carry out if your baby is asleep.
-  Feed your baby shortly before the test. This can help him/her sleep during the test.
-  If your baby is breastfed, it would be preferable if the mother accompanies her baby during the test.
-  Bring everything you need to make your baby comfortable and happy.

Note

The Hospital Authority offers hearing screening to babies born in their hospitals. Most newborns have the above test done in the first two days after birth. Newborn hearing screening test is also available in some private hospitals. If your baby already has the test completed or appointment arranged by the birthing hospital, please attend as scheduled and there is no need to make an appointment for "OAE Test" at MCHC.