



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Newborn hearing screen

Important information for parents

Your baby has been offered an appointment for a hearing screen. These are offered to all babies and this leaflet will explain more.

Why is it important to attend?

The hearing screen and any further audiology assessments are **time critical** because the tests are difficult to perform on older babies and it is important to find out early if your baby may need further assessment. Ideally, the screen should be **completed by 3 months** (12 weeks) of age with audiology assessment, if required, within 4 weeks of the screen completion. It is not possible for us, unless for exceptional reasons, to screen your baby after 3 months of age.

We know that:

- 1-2 babies in every 1000 are born with permanent hearing loss in one or both ears
- This increases to 1 in 100 babies who have spent more than 48 hours in a neonatal intensive care unit
- Approximately 1 in 15 babies tested at the audiology clinic have a permanent hearing loss in one or both ears
- 90% of babies with a hearing loss are born to families with no history of deafness

Finding a hearing loss early gives babies a better chance of developing language, speech and communication skills, as well as making sure their families receive the support they need.

We want to emphasise the importance of attending any appointments you are offered. Please remember, that if you consent to the screening and your baby needs to be referred to Audiology, you will be offered an appointment as quickly as possible which you will need to attend.

We can assure you that our newborn hearing screening service and Audiology Department will be providing a safe environment to complete the test. If you have any questions or reasons not to attend, please speak to a member of the team.

Appointment attendance information

1. We will phone or text you a day or two before the appointment to:
 - a. make sure that you can attend
 - b. ask you about risk factors associated with hearing loss
 - c. check that you and your household are in good health and do not have COVID-19 or any other infectious disease
2. On the day of your baby's appointment, if you or a member of your household are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please ring **0118 322 7556** to let us know
3. Hand sanitiser will be available when you arrive
4. We will wipe down surfaces, furniture, door handles and equipment at the start and end of each clinic and between babies
5. Please bring your baby in their car seat or pram and bring any changing and feeding items with you
6. Your baby needs to be settled, preferably asleep for the screen to be completed
7. Further appointments may be necessary to get a complete set of results
8. Please remember to bring your baby's personal child health record (red book)
9. Please allow plenty of time for travel and parking but do not come into the hospital / clinic until 5 minutes before your appointment time, to help reduce the number of people in waiting areas

Further information

The information 'Screening tests for you and your baby' that was discussed with you by your midwife during your pregnancy, explains why newborn hearing screening is important. Further information is available below or on the NHS website. Go to www.NHS.UK and search for newborn hearing screening.

Please see the online information **Screening tests for you and your baby** by typing this web address www.gov.uk/phe/pregnancy-newborn-screening or by scanning this QR code with your mobile phone



If you have any questions or concerns about attending with your baby, please call us on **0118 322 7556** to discuss.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

A McMaster, Team Lead NHSP February 2021

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