

## Frequently Asked Questions [Diagnostic Hearing Evaluation]

### ***Why does my infant need a Diagnostic Hearing Evaluation?***

The hearing test that your infant received in the hospital was a screening. If an infant does not pass the screening, it means that they need to have further testing by an audiologist. A complete evaluation by an Audiologist is the only way to know for sure the status of your baby's hearing.

### ***What is an Audiologist?***

An audiologist is a medical professional who is trained on the diagnosis and management of hearing loss. Complete assessment of the status of your child's hearing by an experienced pediatric audiologist is essential to ensure the best possible management plan for hearing loss.

### ***What will happen during a Diagnostic Hearing Evaluation?***

The audiologist will collect information regarding your child's medical history, your pregnancy/labor/delivery history and your family history.

The audiologist will also examine your baby's ears. The tests performed may include:

*Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)* – test measures the reaction of the parts of a child's nervous system that affect hearing. The ABR test measures the hearing nerve's response to sound.

*Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE)* – test measures sounds given off by the inner ear when responding to a sound. The OAE test measures the function of hair cells of the inner ear.

*Tympanometry* – test measures the admittance or mobility of the ear drum when air pressure is introduced into the ear canal. A tympanogram reflects the function of the middle ear.

### ***Does a baby need to be sleeping to complete testing?***

The tests are more easily completed when your baby is sleeping. Sometimes it is not possible to finish testing in one appointment. If a second appointment is needed, it should be scheduled as soon as possible. The younger your baby is, the more likely they will sleep through the entire test. If possible, try to schedule to test during a time your infant usually sleeps.

### ***How long does the hearing evaluation take?***

Appointments can take 1-3 hours. The audiologist will be able to tell you when results will be available.

### ***Will testing hurt my baby?***

No. Your baby will not feel discomfort any point during testing.

### ***Where is the hearing evaluation done?***

Please refer to the included list for sites where diagnostic hearing evaluations can be performed in your area.

### ***What if I am uncertain about the diagnostic hearing evaluation?***

We recommend that you carefully consider diagnostic hearing testing. Please ask questions and share your concerns your pediatrician. Finding and treating hearing loss as early as possible is critical for many areas of development, especially speech and language.

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**If you have any other questions, please call  
Rhode Island Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program at 401-277-3700**