



ACT NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM

Why does my baby need a hearing screen?

By the time children say their first word they have been listening to the language that surrounds them for about a year.

The ACT Newborn Hearing Screening Program, which has been fully funded by ACT Health, aims to identify babies born with significant hearing loss and introduce them to appropriate services as soon as possible. About 3 babies out of every 1000 babies born will have a significant hearing loss.

Your baby will be offered a hearing screening as soon as possible after birth.

What is involved in screening my baby?

A trained hearing screener will carry out the screen when your baby is asleep or resting quietly. The screener will place small sensors on your baby's head and play soft clicking sounds into the baby's ears through an earmuff.

The sensors electronically record your baby's responses to the sounds. You are welcome to stay with your baby while the screen is being done. The screen usually does not unsettle the baby and may take 10-20 minutes to complete.

Results

You will be given the results as soon as the screen is completed. The results will be recorded in your baby's Personal Health Record (Blue Book).

If the results indicate that a repeat screen is required, it does not necessarily mean that your baby has a hearing loss. There may be other reasons for this result. The most common reasons for a repeat screen being required are that your baby may have been unsettled at the time of the screening or that there was fluid or debris in the ear after the birth. A repeat screen will be carried out on your baby at a later time.

If you are concerned about your child's hearing or speech and language development in the future, please arrange to have your child's hearing tested. Your doctor can arrange for a referral to an appropriate location for testing your child's hearing.

For further information contact :
Newborn Hearing Screening Program
The Canberra Hospital
Tel 61747458