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Your baby's hearing screening test

Neonatal intensive care and special care baby units



Sgrinio Clyw Babanod **Cymru**
Newborn Hearing Screening **Wales**

This information is available in large print and Braille. Please ask your screener. Easy read, audio and British Sign Language versions are available on phw.nhs.wales/nbhsw-accessible



Your baby's hearing screening test

Neonatal intensive care and special care baby units

This leaflet is for parents of babies who need special care for more than two days. It explains:



- why we have offered a hearing screening test;
- when and where we do the test;
- how the test is done; and
- what the results mean.

All babies are offered health checks in the first few weeks of their life. One of these checks is hearing screening. This is a quick and simple test and will not harm your baby. After this test, some babies need another test in a hospital clinic. You can choose whether or not your baby has hearing screening.

Why screen my baby's hearing?

One or two babies in every 1000 are born with a hearing loss. Most of these babies will be born into families where no-one else has a hearing loss. A baby who needs special care may be more likely to have a hearing loss. It is not easy for parents to tell if a young baby has a hearing loss. Finding out

early is important for your baby's development. It also means that we can offer you support and information right from the start.

Screening does not detect all hearing loss or prevent future hearing difficulties.

When and where the test is done

If your baby is born very early, the test is usually done after your baby is 35 weeks (five weeks before your baby was due). Most babies will have the test while they are in hospital. A small number of babies may not have the test before they go home. Others may be born in a hospital that does not offer the test. If the test is not done in hospital, we will send an appointment for it to be done in the community, usually in a local clinic.



How we do the test

The screening test is done while your baby is settled or asleep. It will not hurt or harm your baby. You can stay with your baby while the test is done. A trained hearing screener will put three small sticky pads on your baby's head and neck. They will put small headphones over your baby's ears which will make a clicking sound. The equipment shows the screener how your baby's ears are responding to the sound.

The screener and nurses in the special-care baby unit can give you more information about the screening test.

The test result

The screener or special-care nurse will tell you the result of the test and explain if another test is needed.

What the result means

If **both** of your baby's ears show a clear response, your baby is unlikely to have a hearing loss. The screener or special-care nurse will give you information on how babies respond to sound as they grow. They will tell you what to do if you have any worries about your baby's hearing.

If **neither** or only **one** of your baby's ears shows a clear response, it does not necessarily mean your baby has a hearing loss. Clear responses may not be seen if:

- your baby is unsettled;
- there is fluid in the ear (from the birth); or
- there is too much noise near the baby when the test is done.

We will offer your baby a hearing test with an audiologist (hearing specialist). About 1 or 2 in every 100 babies need these tests. The screener will give you more information. These tests need to be done when a baby is still likely to sleep a lot during the day. The audiologist will send you an appointment for the test within eight weeks. This allows time for your baby's hearing pathway to develop.



Using your information

For us to contact you as part of the programme, we will need to handle some of your and your baby's personal information. If you need more information about this, you can:

visit the website: phw.nhs.wales/use-of-site/privacy-notice;

email: PHW.InformationGovernance@wales.nhs.uk;
or

phone: 02920 104307.

We also keep your baby's personal details to make sure that the standard of our service is as high as possible. This includes checking your baby's records if your baby is found to have a hearing loss after having a screening test which showed a normal result.

You can find out more on our website at phw.nhs.wales/newborn-hearing-screening

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about Newborn Hearing Screening Wales, please email us through our website or phone us on one of the numbers below.

North Wales: 03000 848710

South West Wales: 01792 343364

South East Wales: 029 2184 3568

If you have any concerns, please write to:

The Director of Screening Services
4th Floor, Capital Quarter 2
Tyndall Street
Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

You can contact us in Welsh or English. It will take us the same amount of time to answer you, whichever language you choose.