

A Parent's Guide to Behavioral Testing



Why does my child need this test?



A hearing test is warranted any time you, a healthcare or childcare provider, or teacher are concerned about your child's hearing.

A hearing test is important to make sure your child can hear all the sounds they need for their continued speech and language development. Even a mild hearing loss can affect language learning and social skills.



Your child's pediatrician may refer you for a hearing test after an initial hearing screening.

Sometimes we need to monitor your child's hearing due to complications when they were born or other medical conditions that can put them at risk for hearing loss.



How will it be done?



Your audiologist will do their best to turn the hearing test into a fun and engaging game.



Sounds will be played through speakers, or through over-the-ear or in-the-ear headphones.



Multiple methods can be used to test your child's hearing. These can include:

- Looking for your child's response to sounds with consistent changes in their behavior, such as looking for the sound.
- Playing various listening games, such as dropping a block into a bucket whenever they hear a beep.



Your audiologist may also check the health of your child's ears. These tests involve a small rubber tip held in your child's ear for a few seconds or minutes. Types of tests include:

- Tympanometry, which can detect any fluid or other middle ear problems that can impact hearing.
- An Otoacoustic Emission (OAE) screening, which can make sure your child's inner ears are healthy.

What should I expect?



Your audiologist will help you figure out your role in the testing process. For some tests, you may be asked to help keep your child quiet while the test is being completed. Sometimes, your child may sit on your lap and you might be asked to be quiet and not respond to the sounds being presented so that the audiologist can judge your child's responses accurately. Other times, you may be asked to distract your child or help them with a "listening game." If you are ever unsure about your role during testing, please ask the audiologist for clarification.



Your audiologist may not be able to complete all testing to acquire a full picture of your child's hearing in one session. This is common and requires a follow up appointment to complete the tests!



This happens because the audiologist needs to obtain information regarding your child's hearing in both ears and at multiple pitches or frequencies. It is very normal for a young child to get tired or bored during testing, which can result in the audiologist needing to stop testing before all of the information is obtained.



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How long will this appointment take?

- 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Is there anything I can do to help make the appointment go smoothly?

- Try to schedule your appointment during a time when your child will be alert—avoid scheduling during typical nap or meal times.
- If possible, leave other children or siblings at home for this visit to minimize distractions, and to allow a parent/caregiver to fully participate in the appointment.
- It is helpful if your child is accompanied by a caregiver or family member who knows them well to answer questions about their hearing and medical history.
- If you have records from hearing tests your child has already had, bring them to the visit.

What if my child will not wear headphones or let someone touch their ears?

- Your audiologist is flexible and has a lot of tricks up their sleeve to make the hearing test comfortable for your child.
- It can be helpful for parents to “role play” the audiology appointment at home, using headphones so that their child can get comfortable with wearing something on or in the ears.

What if hearing loss is found?

- Your audiologist will want additional testing to confirm these results.
- They will ask you to follow up with your pediatrician, as well as an Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician. The ENT will complete a medical evaluation of your child’s ears to help decide whether hearing technology would be helpful for your child.
- If hearing loss is confirmed, the audiologist may discuss hearing technology options to increase your child’s access to sound, which may support their development of spoken language skills.

Resources

- You can also receive support from multiple service providers to help support your child, and your family. If hearing loss is found **your audiologist** will refer you to the appropriate service providers.
- If you have any additional questions, you should bring them up to your **audiologist, pediatrician, or other service providers** on your child’s team.

EIFS Provider **207-781-6230**, referrals@mecehdh.org

- The Early Intervention and Family Services (EIFS) team at the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH) is trained to support families through the process of audiological testing. You may already have an EIFS provider as part of your team through Child Development Services. If not, please contact us for more information and support.

MNHP Parent Consultant **207-239-7300**, parentconsultantmnhp@gmail.com

- If your child is diagnosed with hearing loss **before the age of 4 years**, the Parent Consultant from the Maine Newborn Hearing Program will call you to discuss available resources and next steps. The Parent Consultant is the parent of a deaf child who offers parent-to-parent support as someone who has previously been through this journey with their own child.

Parent Guides mainegbys@gmail.com

- Parent Guides from the Maine Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program provide unbiased support through specially trained parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Maine’s EHDl Process App

- Maine’s EHDl Process App was developed to help families and the professionals who support them better understand the newborn hearing screening through diagnosis and into early intervention process, as well as make them aware of available resources. The App is available to download at no cost.

Scan this QR code to see the iOS App →



Scan this QR code to see the Android App →



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