

A Parent's Guide to Risk Factor Monitoring



Why does my child's hearing need to be tested repeatedly?

 Your child may have certain medical conditions and/or birth complications associated with increased risk for hearing loss. These are known as "risk factors."

- Testing for hearing loss is completed by an audiologist. An audiologist is a doctor who specializes in hearing and balance testing, and who may also fit hearing technology.
- Your child may have referred on their newborn hearing screening when they were born.
- Your child may have chronic fluid and/or ear infections, which can affect their hearing and development.

 You may have someone in your family who had permanent hearing loss during childhood or early adulthood.

 You or your child's providers may have new concerns about your child's hearing, even if they have passed a test or screening in the past.



How does this process work?

 Your child's pediatrician will refer you to a local audiologist with expertise in working with children for hearing testing.

Pediatricians should be familiar with the risk factors for hearing loss.



Ask your pediatrician for a referral for hearing testing with a local pediatric audiologist if you are concerned about risk factors or how your child is hearing.



Scan these QR codes to see other tip sheets on hearing testing for children →



What are some other risk factors associated with hearing loss?



A baby may be at risk for hearing loss if they:

- Did not get enough oxygen during birth.
- Had low APGAR scores.
- Received exchange transfusion for jaundice.
- Were given certain antibiotics or chemotherapy.
- Needed a machine to help them breathe.
- Spent 5 days or more in intensive care.

A baby may also be at risk if:

- The mother or baby had an infection such as meningitis, cytomegalovirus (CMV), herpes, syphilis, rubella, toxoplasmosis, or Zika.
- The baby has certain physical traits that can be associated with hearing loss (for example a skin tag near the ear, or physical features associated with certain syndromes).



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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



Is it necessary to bring my child in for hearing testing?

- o Yes, it is necessary. It is strongly recommended that an audiologist monitors your child’s hearing if your child has any of the identified risk factors.



Why is this important?

- o It is important to detect any hearing loss as early in life as possible to reduce potential effects on your child’s development.
- o During the first few months and years of life, your baby’s brain is ready to learn language, so it is important to act early.
- o Untreated hearing loss can have negative effects on multiple aspects of your child’s development. Communication, development of literacy skills, and performance in school can all be impacted.



What if I don’t know if my child has risk factors?

- o Your baby’s pediatrician, birth hospital, or your OBGYN/midwife may have records of birth history and potential risk factors.



What should I do if I’m concerned about my child’s hearing?

- o You are the expert about your child! Caregiver concern regarding hearing abilities is the most urgent risk factor for hearing loss. Don’t hesitate to ask for a referral for hearing testing. It is better to know for sure than to leave your questions unanswered.



Find more resources from Earliest Interactions:

Website: earliestinteractions.com
 Email: info@earliestinteractions.com
 Call: (207) 781-6335

Scan this QR code to see the official Maine CDC guidelines for hearing loss risk factors →



Maine’s EHDI Process App

Maine’s EHDI 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



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