



Why does my baby need a hearing screen?

Your baby will be offered a series of health checks in the first few weeks of life. One of these looks for hearing loss. The hearing screen will be offered as soon as possible after birth.

If it is not possible to have the screen while you and your baby are in hospital, you will be offered the hearing screen for your baby as an outpatient or at a local community location, soon after discharge from hospital.

Why does my baby need a hearing screen?

About one to two babies out of every 1000 babies born will have a significant hearing loss.

It is important to find out as soon as possible how well your baby hears so that you and your baby can get the correct advice and support. By the time children say their first word they have been listening to the way we talk for about a year.

What is involved in screening my baby?

A trained hearing screener will carry out the screen when your baby is asleep or resting quietly. You are welcome to stay with your baby while the screen is being done.

The screener will place small sensor pads on your baby's head and play soft clicking sounds into the baby's ears through an earphone. The sensor pads record your baby's responses to the sounds.

The screen usually does not unsettle the baby. The screen may take 10-20 minutes to complete.

Results

As soon as the hearing screen is completed, the results will be explained to you and recorded in your baby's Personal Health Record (Blue Book).

If the results show 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 reason for a repeat screen being required is fluid or a blockage in your baby's ear after the birth.



What do I need to do as my baby grows older?

Hearing may not always remain the same over time.

It is important to monitor your baby's speech and language development as well as their responses to sound.

You can refer to the checklist in the Personal Health Record (Blue Book) or the checklist overleaf to monitor your child's progress.

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. Ask your family doctor for a referral to an appropriate service for your child's hearing to be tested.

Hearing can be tested at any age.

For further information contact

NSW Department of Health

Tel (02) 9391 9000 TTY (02) 9391 9900

Email hearing@doh.health.nsw.gov.au

**Statewide Infant Screening
– Hearing (SWISH)**

Hotline: 1800 551 175

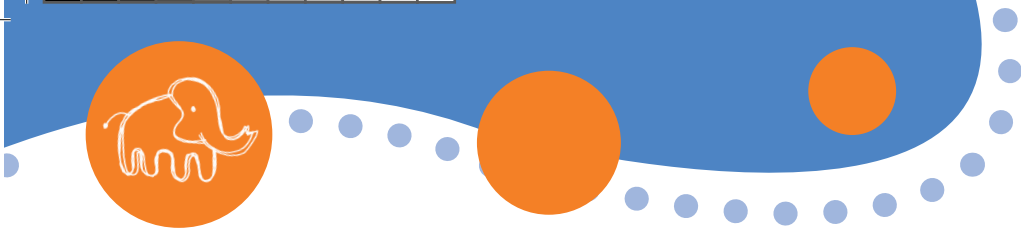
Website:

www.health.nsw.gov.au/initiatives/swish

Local contact / appointment details

For health advice contact *Australia Health Direct* 1800 022 222





HEARING CHECKLIST

Birth to 3 months	Reacts to loud sounds
	Becomes quiet with familiar voices or sounds
	Makes cooing noises
	Responds to speech by looking at speaker's face
3-6 months	Turns eyes or head toward sounds
	Starts to make speech-like sounds
	Laughs and makes noises to show how they are feeling
6-9 months	Babbles, 'dada' 'ma-ma' 'baba'
	Shouts/vocalises to get attention
	Will often respond to 'no' and own name
	Responds to singing and music
9-12 months	Imitates speech sounds of others
	Understands simple words, eg 'ball', 'dog', 'daddy'
	Turns head to soft sounds
	Speaks first words
12-18 months	Appears to understand some new words each week
	Follows simple spoken instructions, eg 'get the ball'
	Points to people, body parts or toys when asked
	Continually learns new words to say although may be unclear
18-24 months	Has between 100-200 words that they use regularly
	Listens to simple stories or songs
	Combines two or more words in short phrases eg 'more juice'

Notes:
