

# Your baby's visit to the Audiology Department

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Information for patients,  
relatives and carers

**Excellence**  
**Compassion**  
**Expertise**

## Introduction

Your baby has been referred to Audiology for further hearing tests after his or her newborn hearing screening. You will be seen by one of our Paediatric Audiologists who will perform all required testing on your baby. You are welcome to bring a friend or relative if you wish. If possible, please arrange childcare for young siblings, as the test environment needs to be quiet and appointments can last up to 2 hours.

The Audiology Department is located on the First Floor at 11 Shelley Road, Boscombe, Dorset, BH1 4JQ. Parking on-site is free for patients but it is very limited. There is on street parking (for limited periods) and a Pay and Display car park located nearby on Palmerston Road. The service is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the building but there is a lift available.

## What happens at my baby's appointment?

Our tests are similar to those used for the newborn screening. However they provide more detailed information about your baby's hearing. The tests will not harm your baby in any way. They are usually performed while your baby is asleep and you will stay with him or her for the whole appointment. At least one of the following will be performed:

- **Otoscopy and/or tympanometry.** The clinician may examine your baby's outer ears with a light, as well as perform a pressure test to check how well the eardrums are moving.
- **Otoacoustic Emission (OAE) test.** This test is preferably performed whilst your baby is asleep, but can sometimes be performed whilst baby is awake and still. This involves putting a soft earpiece in the outer part of your baby's ear which plays clicking sounds. In response to this, the inner ear (or 'cochlea') usually produces an emission, or "echo", which is detected by the testing equipment.

- **Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) test.** This is most successful if your baby is fast asleep, either in a car seat, pram or in your arms. We will gently rub an area of your baby's skin on their forehead and behind each ear and stick a small measuring pad in each position. A small earphone is placed in the outer part of your baby's ear which plays sounds into the ear (similar to the OAE test). A computer then measures electrical responses to these sounds from the hearing nerve.

We will be able to explain the results to you at the end of the appointment and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. We will also post you a copy of your baby's clinical report, as well as send a copy to your GP, Health Visitor and any other professionals involved (with your permission).



Occasionally, we are unable to obtain a full set of results in one session (e.g. if your baby awakes before testing is complete). In these cases, a further appointment will be booked on another day to continue with testing.

## Is there anything I can do to prepare my baby for their appointment?

Testing is most successful if your baby is fast asleep. Parents generally find that keeping their baby awake in the morning prior to the Appointment helps in addition to a good feed just before they arrive. It is a good idea to also bring an extra feed with you. We are able to warm bottles if required and we can provide a quiet area for breast feeding. There are also baby changing facilities nearby. It can also be useful to bring your baby's favourite comforters/ toys and a blanket. If possible, please do not apply any moisturiser or baby oil on your baby's forehead or behind their ears the night before or on the day of testing, as this can make it difficult to attach the measuring pads.

## Further information

Please do not hesitate to contact the Audiology department if you have any questions on **0300 303 8640** or email: [audiologyenquiries@dhuft.nhs.uk](mailto:audiologyenquiries@dhuft.nhs.uk)

Alternatively you may find the National Deaf Children's Society a useful source of information:

- Visit the NDCS web site at <http://www.ndcs.org.uk/>
- Contact the NDCS Freephone Helpline on 0808 800 8880 (Monday-Thursday: 9.30am–9.30pm. Friday: 9.30am–5pm).
- Send an email to [helpline@ndcs.org.uk](mailto:helpline@ndcs.org.uk)
- Internet live chat at [www.ndcs.org.uk/livechat](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/livechat)

The following websites also have some useful information for parents (enter “newborn hearing” into the search box):

NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions>

GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk>

The information in this leaflet is available in additional languages and alternative formats. Please contact the Trust for further details.

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