

PREPARING FOR INFANT EVALUATION

Your child has been scheduled for diagnostic auditory brainstem response (ABR) and otoacoustic emissions (OAE) testing. A screening version of one or both of these tests was completed in the hospital nursery. We will be completing diagnostic versions of the ABR and OAE, which will provide a more thorough test of your baby's hearing. Both tests are safe and accurate; the evaluation is typically completed in one-and-a-half hours.

The most important period of speech and language development for children is during the first three years of life, a time when the brain is developing and maturing. These skills appear to develop best in a world rich with sounds, sights and consistent exposure to the speech and language of others.

Your baby cannot tell you if they cannot hear. Babies who do not hear normally may have problems learning to talk. Identifying hearing loss early gives your baby the best chance to develop normal speech and language skills.

We ask that parents follow the instructions below so we may do our best to obtain reliable test information:

- Schedule your child's appointment near their routine nap time.
- On the day of the test:
 - Awaken your child early and eliminate naps prior to the test. Depriving your child of their nap improves the likelihood that your child will sleep during the testing.
 - Wash your child's hair on the morning of the test; please do not apply any creams, ointments or oils.
 - Please bring someone along with you during the car ride to keep your child awake.
 - Plan to feed your child at the beginning of their scheduled appointment time.

How are the tests performed?

The tests are performed in a quiet room. During the test, your child may be held in your arms or lie in an infant carrier. We must complete ABR testing while your child is asleep or is very relaxed and still to ensure that the baby's movements do not interfere with the test.

An ABR tests your child's ability to hear soft sounds by monitoring the activity of the auditory or hearing nerve. The test is performed by placing four Band-Aid-like electrodes on your baby's head to detect responses. Sounds are played to the baby's ears through very small earphones. An audiologist will record and monitor the test responses.

An OAE is a measurement of an acoustic response produced by the inner ear. As your child rests quietly, sounds are generated, and responses are recorded through a small probe placed in the child's ear canal. The audiologist will monitor and measure the presence or absence of an emission response.

Once the testing is complete, the audiologist will review and interpret your child's test results and contact you within two business days with the results of your child's evaluation.

Please contact Karen Mitchell, Director of Audiology & Hearing Aid Services, at 614-261-5457 should you have any questions or need further information prior to your child's appointment.