

# Waiver of Newborn Hearing Screening

## **Waiver of Hearing Screening**

You have said you do NOT want to have your baby's hearing screened. Please let your doctors know that your baby's hearing HAS NOT been screened.

This brochure will give you important facts about hearing screening. It explains how the test is done and why it is important for your baby.

If you want to have your baby's hearing screened at a later time, you can. Call your baby's doctor or 1-877-388-5301, Toll Free, for more information.

## **How Many Babies Have a Hearing Loss?**

Serious hearing loss is found in about 2-4 out of 1,000 babies. About 50% of babies with hearing loss have no known signs or risk factors, like serious illness or family history of deafness. Some babies may develop hearing loss later in life from repeated ear infections, meningitis, head injury or other medical conditions. Sometimes babies lose their hearing and the reason is never known.

## **Why Test a Baby?**

Hearing loss can be invisible. Now, technology makes it possible to detect a hearing loss in the early days of a baby's life.

The first months and years of a child's life are very important for developing communication skills. A baby who has a hearing loss or deafness may have difficulty in developing normal language skills or may not do well in school. This is why it is important to identify the loss early and provide special services to the baby and family.

## **There is Something That Can Be Done!**

The sooner a baby's hearing loss is identified, the sooner help can be provided. Recent research shows that help in the first months of life can make a difference for a lifetime. Babies who are hard of hearing or deaf and receive intervention services (special help) by 6 months of age are more likely to develop language and communication skills at the same rate as infants who have normal hearing. These children have a better chance of success in school.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and other professional organizations recommend hearing screening for all newborns, and hearing should be closely monitored during the early years of life.

## **How Do We Screen Hearing?**

The screening takes only a few minutes while your baby sleeps. Soft sounds are played through earphones specially made for babies. Your baby's responses to the sound would be automatically measured by Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) or Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR).

Today's easy screening methods are very reliable. Rarely will a baby with hearing loss be missed.

## **What's Next for Baby?**

Hearing should be checked as your baby grows. Newborn Hearing Screening is a first step in watching your baby's hearing, speech and language progress. It is important to pay attention to how your baby's language and speech develop.

The "Hearing & Speech Ages & Stages" information in the brochure lists some of the things most babies will do at different ages. As your baby grows, you can compare his/her actions and speech to the list. If you have any concerns about your baby's hearing, contact your baby's doctor or health care provider right away.

## **Who Pays for Hearing Screening?**

The cost of the Newborn Hearing Screening may be covered by your health insurance. Medi-Cal will pay for screening for eligible babies.



**For more information on the  
Newborn Hearing Screening  
Program, call  
Toll Free 1-877-388-5301  
or visit us on the web at  
[www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/nhsp](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/nhsp)**

*The goal of California's Newborn Hearing Screening Program is to identify babies with hearing loss and link them with services by six months of age. The program has Hearing Coordination Centers that work with families, health care providers and hospitals to make sure children get needed services.*

*The Newborn Hearing Screening Program collects information about your baby's hearing screenings as per Section 124119 of the Health and Safety Code. The Hearing Coordination Centers may use this information to assist you and your baby in getting services you may need. It is possible that the Hearing Coordination Center may contact you about the follow-up services.*

**Hearing can be tested at any age.**

## **Hearing & Speech Ages & Stages**

### **Birth to 3 months**

- Quiets to familiar voices or sounds
- Reacts to loud sounds, *baby startles, blinks, stops sucking, cries, or wakes up*
- Makes soft sounds when awake, *baby gurgles*

### **3 to 6 Months**

- Turns eyes or head toward sounds, voices, noise making toys, dog barking
- Starts to make speech like sounds, "ga," "ooh," "ba" and *p, b, m* sounds
- Reacts to a change in your tone of voice

### **6 to 9 Months**

- Responds to own name and looks when called
- Understands simple words, "no," "bye-bye," "juice"
- Babbles, "da da da," "ma ma ma," "ba ba ba"

### **9 to 12 Months**

- Responds to both soft or loud sounds
- Repeats single words and imitates animal sounds
- Points to favorite toys or foods when asked

### **12 to 18 Months**

- Uses 10 or more words
- Follows simple spoken directions, "get the ball"
- Points to people, body parts or toys when asked
- Bounces to music

### **18 to 24 Months**

- Uses 20 or more words
- Combines 2 or more words, "more juice," "what's that?"
- Uses many different consonant sounds at beginning of words, *b, g, m*
- Listens to simple stories and songs

### **2 Years to 3 Years**

- Uses 2-3 word sentences
- At 2 years, people can understand what the child says some of the time (25%-50%)
- At 3 years, people can understand what the child says most of the time (50%-75%)
- Follows two-step instructions, "get the ball and put it on the table"

*If you have any concerns about your baby's hearing, contact your baby's doctor or health care provider.*