

How are your newborn's ears working? Early hearing test is a must

January 2 2020, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—When you have a baby, it seems like you visit the doctor

all the time for checks on weight and length and to get needed vaccinations. But are you as aware of the guidelines regarding hearing checks for your little one?

Following them is extremely important to his or her development, especially if a problem is found. Hearing loss is the most common congenital condition in the United States, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

For every 1,000 infants born, three have moderate, severe or [profound hearing loss](#), which can mean delayed development in language, learning and speech.

That's why clear guidelines have been established for identifying and helping to overcome hearing problems. Babies are supposed to receive a hearing screening by the time they're 1 month old. Any hearing loss should be diagnosed by 3 months, and it's best that needed intervention for any hearing loss happens by the time your baby is 6 months of age.

These guidelines are proven to have benefits, but the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention wanted to know how often they are followed and their impact on language development. So, researchers studied children ranging in age from 8 months to just over 3 years—all of whom had [hearing loss](#) diagnosed during infancy.

Children who did not receive care as outlined in the guidelines had language skills that were far below normal for their age. On the other hand, [babies](#) who did receive the suggested care had a substantially higher vocabulary score than those who were treated later on.

Overcoming hearing problems requires a team effort. Specialized hearing testing should be done by a qualified pediatric audiologist. Ask your pediatrician for details.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on [early hearing detection](#) and steps parents should take.

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Citation: How are your newborn's ears working? Early hearing test is a must (2020, January 2) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-01-newborn-ears-early.html>

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