

# Newborn Hearing Screening

## Basic Steps for OAE Testing

**Probe fit is the most important part of getting a fast and accurate screening test.**

A tight seal will ensure a strong signal is sent into the baby's ear and help keep out any extra environmental noise. Remember, the probe and tips are designed so that they cannot hurt the baby's ears!

- **Be sure the baby is quiet;** sleeping is ideal. Having the baby swaddled during testing will help make sure he or she doesn't knock the probe out of his or her ear during the test.
- **Always use the largest size probe tip possible.** Make sure you slide the tip all the way over the base of the probe until it can't go any further.
- **Newborn ear canals tend to be "sticky."** Prior to inserting the probe, massage the area in front of the ear in a circular motion for 10–15 seconds. Also, gently pull out on the pinna, or outer ear, and rotate in a circular motion for a few seconds before inserting the probe.
- **When inserting the probe** into the baby's ear, pull back and down on the pinna to fully open the ear canal and help obtain a good probe fit. Release the pinna after you insert the probe, letting the ear canal fall snugly around the probe.
- **As you insert the probe in the ear,** use firm pressure while giving the probe a quarter turn. This creates a downward twisting motion, which will help you to insert the probe far enough into the ear to obtain a tight seal. Aim the probe toward the infant's nose.
- **To check if you have a good fit,** gently tug on the probe after you have inserted it into the baby's ear. There should be resistance and it should not slide out easily. If it slides out easily, try again. You may need to use a larger size tip.
- **Do not hold the probe while you are administering the screening test.** By holding the probe in the baby's ear, you may unintentionally push it against the wall of the ear canal, preventing a signal from getting through. You may also unintentionally create noise, which can interfere with testing. If the probe is properly placed in the baby's ear, it should stay in place by itself and you will not need to hold it.
- **Clip the small box** that is on the probe cord to the baby's blanket or bassinet to take the weight off the probe and keep it from pulling out of the baby's ear.
- **Please fill out a pink (for an initial hearing screen) or blue (for a re-screen) card and send it to:** Washington State Department of Health – EHDDI Program  
1610 NE 150th Street, PO Box 55279, Shoreline, WA 98155.

# OAE TESTING

# Newborn Hearing Screening OAE and ABR Equipment Checklist

**Has your equipment been calibrated within the last year?**

This is necessary, in addition to the annual electrical safety checks done by your biomedical department.

**For most OAE equipment, and Biologic OAE and ABR equipment, contact:**

MSR West

6520 212th St SW, Ste 208, Lynnwood, WA 98036

Phone: 360-282-4170 or 800-950-3277

Fax: 360-282-4175

<http://msrwest.com>

**For Natus equipment, contact:**

Natus Medical

Toll-free Phone: 800-303-0306

Hours: Monday–Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Pacific

[www.natus.com](http://www.natus.com)



**Do you have spare supplies on hand?** This would include probe tips in different sizes for OAE and/or ABR, electrodes/sensors and ear couplers for ABR, and any other supplies you use regularly. Supplies can be ordered through the above companies.

**Does someone regularly perform a listening check** and/or probe check according to manufacturer's instructions? For technical assistance, contact the above companies.

**Do you know how to order more pink and blue cards for reporting data to the state?**

Washington State Department of Health – EHDDI Program

1610 NE 150th Street, PO Box 55279, Shoreline, WA 98155

Phone: 206-418-5613 Fax: 206-364-0074

E-mail: [NBS.Prog@doh.wa.gov](mailto:NBS.Prog@doh.wa.gov)

[www.doh.wa.gov/earlyhearingloss](http://www.doh.wa.gov/earlyhearingloss)

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats.

To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TTY/TDD 711).