

# Hearing Assessments for Children Aged Six Months to Four Years

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This information leaflet describes what will happen when you bring your child to clinic for a hearing assessment. Please read this leaflet carefully as it will help you to prepare your child for their hearing assessment.

## Preparing for your visit

To assess your child's hearing, we need your child's full cooperation. During the assessment, your child will need to sit still and listen to some sounds. Depending on their age they may need to listen to and follow instructions given by the Audiologist. If your child does not cooperate in the assessment we will be unable to assess your child's hearing. A good way to prepare your child for the visit is to use this leaflet to explain exactly what is going to happen.

## What will happen when we come to clinic?

When you arrive at clinic our receptionist will book your child in. They will ask you to confirm one or two details so that we can ensure that your child's information is up to date. The receptionist will then direct you to the waiting area. Hospital waiting areas can be boring places for young children so it may be worthwhile bringing a quiet toy to keep your child entertained. A member of the Audiology team will collect you from the waiting room to assess your child's hearing.

## What will happen during the assessment?

Once comfortable in the assessment room, the Audiologist will ask a number of questions relating to your child's hearing. The Audiologist will then examine your child's ears using an otoscope (a piece of equipment used to examine the outer ear and ear canal). This allows us to check whether there are any problems with the outer ear. This may include the presence of excess ear wax or perhaps an ear infection.

The Audiologist will assess your child's hearing. The specific tests we use to assess your child's hearing will be decided when we meet you. This decision will be based on your child's age, development and ability. Most commonly, we will use a test called Visual Reinforcement Audiometry. In this test your child will listen to some sounds played via a set of speakers. When your child turns to find the sound a short animation will appear to reward them for turning. This way we can measure exactly what levels of sound they can hear.

Sometimes, if we suspect that there is a problem with the middle part of the ear, we will need to perform another test called Tympanometry. To do this, the Audiologist will place a small rubber ear tip in the entrance to the ear. Your child will feel a slight pressure in the ear while the Tympanometer makes its measurements. Although we are putting a slight pressure in the ear this does not feel uncomfortable for your child.

## **When do I find out the results of the assessment?**

The Audiologist will explain the results of the assessment at the end of the appointment. You will also receive a copy of the letter that goes to the person who referred your child to see us which will contain the result of the assessment

## **What happens next?**

This depends entirely on the results of the assessment. If everything is normal your child will be discharged from clinic. If we identify a problem or if your child does not cooperate for their assessment we may need to see your child again. In some cases we may need to refer your child to an Ear, Nose and Throat doctor. Whatever we do, the Audiologist will explain fully why it is necessary and what the benefit will be.

## **Data Protection**

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us to improve the services available, your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews and Statistics.

Further information is available via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website or by contacting the Data Protection Officer by telephone on 0191 445 8418 or by email [ghnt.ig.team@nhs.net](mailto:ghnt.ig.team@nhs.net).

**This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request**

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