

EHDI

Iowa's Early Hearing
Detection & Intervention System



Iowa's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INFANT HEARING SCREENING

Here are some practical tips to make OAE infant hearing screening go as smoothly as possible and lower refer rates.

- 1** Find a quiet room in which to test. Noisy heating and cooling systems, people talking, telephones ringing, and crying babies can make testing unnecessarily challenging. Avoid waking them up during a ride down the hall. Sometimes an empty patient room is sufficient.
- 2** The test room with the screening system and baby should be in close proximity. Have your cleaning supplies, extra tips, etc., readily available. It may be helpful to dim the lights.
- 3** Wait until the baby is at least 24 hours old, if possible. Birthing debris clogging the ear canal can result in a higher number of referrals. The longer you wait, the greater your chances are for a successful screen.
- 4** If possible, screen while the baby is asleep. It is possible to test a baby when it's awake, but this may slow down the test time, and increase your frustration level. If a baby is breathing rapidly in an alert state and is actively sucking on a pacifier, the baby's internal noise level can be louder than the emission you're trying to measure. This will result in a technical fail.
- 5** Swaddle the baby snugly on its side. You may wish to place a rolled towel along its back for support.
- 6** Place the probe tip deeply and firmly into the baby's ear canal. A deep, snug probe fit often is the key to obtaining a good test. Pull back on the ear with one hand, while inserting the probe with the other hand. Comfort the baby by putting pressure on the shoulder after placing the probe into the ear canal.
- 7** Massage the ear if you suspect significant birthing debris in the ear canal. Move your index finger in a circular motion just in front of the ear canal. (Think of it as a zip-lock baggy stuck together with peanut butter and you're pulling it apart.)
- 8** If your first screening session is not successful, try again before the baby goes home.

If you need further assistance on infant hearing screening, please contact:

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Another great resource is the Iowa Newborn Hearing Screening Protocol: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/iaehdi/>