

# ALERT: REFER Result

## Hearing Screen Result Notification

Minnesota Newborn  
Screening Program



### Your baby **did not pass** the hearing screen.

This means that your baby needs further testing to make sure he or she is hearing everything well. Please bring this sheet to your baby's primary care provider at your first well-child visit.

ATTN: Primary Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Baby's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Baby's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital/Birth Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Hearing Screen: \_\_\_\_\_

Right Ear:  PASS:

Left Ear:  PASS:

REFER:

REFER:

#### **NOTE:**

An appointment for hearing follow-up testing/rescreening was made:

Date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### Next steps:

- 1 Attend the follow-up appointment listed above. If you are unable to attend or if there is no appointment listed above, talk with your provider about making alternative arrangements—ideally within 2 to 4 weeks of birth (or as medically feasible for NICU graduates).
- 2 Bring this result notification with you to your baby's first clinic visit and discuss it with your baby's primary care provider. If no follow-up appointment has been scheduled at this time, your baby's provider can help you schedule an appointment with an audiologist.
- 3 Make sure to ask both your primary care provider and audiologist any questions you may have about your baby's hearing. The sooner hearing loss is identified, the sooner babies with hearing loss can receive help and begin developing critical speech and language skills.



# Parent Information: Your Baby's Hearing

Access to language is the foundation for your baby's ability to learn, so it's important to identify any problems with hearing as soon as possible. Speech and language begin to develop at birth, even though babies don't usually begin to talk until about one year of age. A child with hearing loss may have difficulty with speech and language if hearing loss is not identified early.

Without hearing screening, hearing loss is usually not noticeable to parents or providers until developmental delays have already occurred. Screening and follow-up testing are the only ways to find hearing loss early. Learning if your baby has hearing loss will help you and your baby find the best ways to communicate and avoid delays.



## Does a REFER result mean that my baby has hearing loss?

A REFER result does not necessarily mean that your baby has hearing loss, but it does mean that your baby needs more testing to know for sure. Babies with a REFER result need to see an audiologist (hearing specialist) as soon as possible. The audiologist will do more complete tests to find out whether your baby has hearing loss, how significant it is, and what can be done to help.

There are several reasons why a baby might have a REFER result.

No matter what the reason, timely follow-up is important.

## Can I check my baby's hearing at home?

No — hearing testing at home cannot tell you whether your baby has hearing loss. Many babies with hearing loss will startle to loud noises even when they can't hear softer sounds such as voices. To know whether your baby has hearing loss in the range where speech is heard, your baby must have an objective hearing screening to measure his or her response to sound.

## What if my baby has a REFER result in only one ear?

Babies who receive a REFER result in only one ear still need to see an audiologist for further testing. Even hearing loss in only one ear can cause developmental delay if it is not detected early.

Follow-up is critical!  
**KNOW THE FACTS:**

★ **50%**  
of infants with hearing loss have no risk factors

**95%** ★  
of infants with hearing loss have hearing parents

★ Children with hearing loss who begin early intervention before  
**6 months**  
of age have significantly better developmental outcomes than children who begin intervention later

