



Children'sSM
Healthcare of Atlanta
Dedicated to All Better

Our Hearing Loss Program

Early detection makes the biggest difference

Hearing loss in children can have a profound impact on their development. The earlier the hearing loss begins, the bigger the effect it can have on a child later in life. Children with hearing loss may find it more difficult to:

- Learn speech and language.
- Develop social relationships.
- Fit in at school.

The earlier hearing loss is identified and treated, the better the outcome. Our Hearing Loss Program can help identify, treat and support children with hearing loss.

Newborn hearing screenings

About three out of every 1,000 babies are born with hearing loss. Most of those cases are born with no other medical conditions and have no family history of hearing loss. The majority are identifiable by a newborn hearing screening in the hospital before the baby goes home. These tests are the product of a worldwide initiative to identify hearing problems early. They are pain free and help us begin treatment as early as possible to stimulate sound in your baby's brain.

What should I do if my baby doesn't pass?

There are many reasons a baby may fail the initial screening. If your baby doesn't pass, you will get a referral for a second screening by the time he is 1 month old. Depending on the results of that appointment, you may need to schedule additional evaluations with an audiologist (hearing specialist). The audiologist will determine if your child has hearing loss and needs to see an otolaryngologist. An otolaryngologist is an ear, nose and throat doctor, also known as an ENT, that can help identify the cause of the problem and determine how to treat it.

Following your doctor's recommendations, our specialists can help determine which additional evaluations and treatments are right for your child.

The Children's Hearing Loss Program

Our Hearing Loss Program is dedicated to meeting the needs of children with hearing loss. The team consists of pediatric-trained otolaryngologists and audiologists. They work together to provide comprehensive care for infants, children, teens and young adults.

We use a variety of methods to evaluate our pediatric patients. These help us determine the source of the problem. Our evaluations include:

- **Otoacoustic emission testing**—an assessment of the cochlea, the organ of hearing in the inner ear. These tests are part of the newborn hearing screenings.
- **Behavioral hearing evaluation**—an assessment that can begin as early as 6 months and is adapted to a child's age and development.
- **Auditory brainstem response (ABR)**—an assessment of auditory nerve function.
- **Middle ear evaluation**—an assessment of the ear drum and middle ear muscle reflexes.

If a permanent hearing loss is identified, our treatments can help meet the needs of a child with hearing loss. We use specific types of hearing technology to treat the individual needs of each patient. They include:

- **Hearing aids**—devices that amplify sound.
- **Bone conduction and bone anchored hearing aids**—specialized devices for children who cannot use traditional hearing aids.
- **Cochlear implants**—surgical implants for children who are profoundly hearing impaired. Your child's ENT will determine if this is appropriate.
- **FM systems and assistive listening devices**—additional technology for challenging listening situations, like in the classroom.

We provide follow-up evaluations and treatment services to monitor each child and his individual needs. We can connect your child with the appropriate therapy services if necessary. We will work with your family to ensure you have the support you need to help with your child's development and success. Audiology services are available at several of our neighborhood locations in metro Atlanta.



Visit choa.org/hearingloss or call **404-785-7174** for more information.

Some physicians and affiliated healthcare professionals on the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta team are independent providers and are not our employees.