

INFORMATION SHEET NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

Why should newborn's hearing be tested?

Two to three children out of every 1,000 are born with hearing impairment in one or both ears. Detecting hearing loss in infants can be difficult, which is why newborn hearing screening is so important. It allows early identification of hearing problems and supports the child's future development. Most children with hearing loss are born into families with no previous history of hearing issues. Early detection gives families the opportunity to receive guidance and support in raising a child with hearing impairment.

How is the child's hearing tested?

At Tartu Ülikooli Kliinikum, newborns undergo a hearing test before they are discharged home. If the screening performed on the second or third day after birth is unsuccessful, you will be invited back for a repeat test.

The hearing test is painless and comfortable for the baby. It is usually carried out while the baby is asleep. The procedure takes only a few minutes, and you may stay with your baby throughout the entire process. No anesthesia or sedatives are used.

For the hearing test, the room must be quiet. The midwife gently places a small, soft earpiece into the baby's ear canal. Through this earpiece, a series of soft beeping sounds are played. A healthy inner ear responds to these sounds with an echo, called otoacoustic emissions (OAE), which the computer measures and records. You will receive the test results immediately after the screening.