

Getting Ready to Leave the NICU

Title: Audiology

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

Link: <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/preemie/Pages/Getting-Ready-to-Leave-the-NICU.aspx>

While you're learning all you can about your baby's care, the discharge coordinator or case manager is planning your baby's final tests and making preparations for discharge. Common discharge tests are explained here, but not all NICU babies require all of the tests discussed. Ask your baby's nurse what to expect as discharge draws near.

Hearing Test

Hearing tests—also called *audiology screenings*—are done in most nurseries before discharge. Electronic sound and response monitoring determine if your baby can hear. Environmental conditions, such as surrounding noise or a crying baby, can cause inconclusive results, however. If this happens, a retest should be scheduled in a more controlled environment. If your baby responds to your voice or to noise-making toys held where he can't see them, there is usually no reason for concern. After discharge, your child's hearing should be monitored by your health care provider at periodic health exams. If you are concerned about your baby's hearing, never hesitate to insist on a more extensive hearing exam. These are available at a pediatric audiologist's office or in pediatric outpatient rehabilitation centers.

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