



My child has been referred for a hearing exam and I have some questions.....

My child has not complained, and I don't see a problem.

Can't I wait on this for a while?

DEFINITELY NOT!

Children do not know if what they hear is normal or abnormal. The screening can pick up problems that you, your child or their teacher may not notice. These problems will not correct themselves. Children who are not treated for hearing loss early in life often will have increased difficulties when they begin kindergarten. Usually it is easy to correct the hearing in young children when caught early.

- **EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT ARE SO IMPORTANT**
- **DO NOT DELAY**

What does a “Referral” to a hearing doctor mean?

The screening test has found that there may be a problem with your child’s hearing, which could mean that he/she hears poorly in one or both ears. Your child has been *referred* (asked to go) for further testing and possible treatment.

It is very important that you take your child to an Audiologist or Ear Nose and Throat Doctor (M.D.) as soon as possible for a thorough hearing exam. This “exam” will allow the doctor to identify any problem with your child’s hearing and help correct it.

The most common problem that kids have at this age is a blockage in one or both ears. Infection, ear wax build-up, or other issues which can be easily corrected, can cause this.

My child isn’t even in school yet. Why do I need to take him to the specialist now?

Hearing problems in young children can impact learning, readiness for kindergarten, and behavior. Children can withdraw or act out because they cannot hear what is going on and understand why. Lack of hearing can impede a child’s ability to distinguish sounds that are critical for learning to read.

My pediatrician told me that my child was fine.
Should I ignore this screening referral?

If your child received a hearing referral, he or she needs a thorough hearing exam. Many pediatricians do not have the specialized equipment to do this type of exam, but they may be able to refer you to a hearing specialist.

I can't take time off to take my child for an exam. Can't it wait a few months?

It is very important to have your child examined as soon as possible. The earlier the treatment, the greater the likelihood that your child will have normal hearing is increased. Some doctors offer evening or weekend hours where you don't have to take time off work. A family member may also be able to help you. Your child's hearing is priceless.

My child is too young to have a hearing problem.

Even young children and babies can have hearing problems that can and should be corrected at any age.

I don't have a hearing problem and no one in my family has had problems, so I don't believe my child has a hearing problem.
Should I ignore this referral?

While hearing problems can run in families, they often happen without any family history. You should not ignore the referral. It could have a major impact on your child's learning and social interactions. Help your child get the necessary hearing care as soon as possible.

I don't have any insurance and can't afford the exam. What should I do?

There are some options for getting help or a free hearing exam:

- Check with your local Lions Club for assistance in getting a free hearing exam for your child
- Contact your doctor or the Health Department for advice or assistance
- Most insurance plans will cover this hearing exam. Check with your child's provider.

Where to go or call for further help

- **Local County Health Department (Lee, Collier, Hendry and Glades Counties)**
- **Local Lions Clubs**
- **Florida Academy of Audiology (561) 939-0675**
- **Florida Society of Otolaryngology (561) 939-0177**
- **Yellow Pages of your phone book or online. Look for an Audiologist or Ear Nose and Throat Doctor and ask if they examine young children.**

