

## Practical G

### The distraction test of hearing

#### **Introduction**

Hearing should be tested in any baby or young child where there is a worry that hearing may not be normal or if language is not developing as expected. The distraction test is used to test hearing in babies and young children. It is best for babies between 6 and 18 months old. The test uses one person to distract the baby (which we will call the “distractor”) and one person testing hearing (which we will call the “tester”). If possible the tester should use a rattle to test hearing.

Rattles can be bought. They can also be made, using grains of salt, sand, sugar or rice. If a rattle is not available, the voice can be used to test hearing.

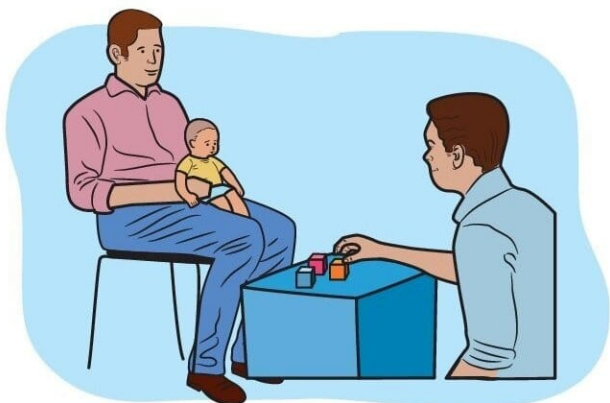
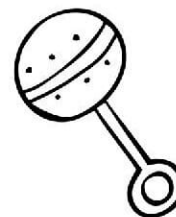
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### Equipment

Two people to perform the test, one as the distractor and one as the tester.  
Wooden blocks or similar toy (the toy should not make any noise)  
A towel or sheet  
Rattle (if available)

### PROCEDURE

1. Make sure you are in a quiet room
2. The baby should sit in the lap of the parent. The parent should be asked to stay still and silent
3. The distractor should sit in front of the baby, with the wooden blocks (or other toy).
4. The tester should sit behind and to the side of the baby, holding the rattle. The tester should be about one metre away from the baby.



5. The distractor plays a game with the baby. For example, putting wooden blocks on top of each other.
6. The distractor stops playing and covers the blocks (or the toy) with a towel or sheet
7. The tester gently shakes the rattle for five seconds. The baby should turn to the noise.
8. The tester moves to behind the other side of the baby. Steps 5 to 7 are repeated.
9. Repeat steps 5 and 6. Do not make any noise. The baby should not turn its head. This confirms that the baby is actually turning their head because of the sound.
10. If the baby does not turn, the test can be repeated with a louder sound. If there is no response the child should be sent to a specialist for further tests.

### ADDITIONAL NOTES



If you do not have a rattle the tester can use their voice. A low pitch “oooo” sound and a medium pitch “eeee” sound should be used on each side.

Remember This method is not always reliable or validated. In case of any doubt, REFER!