

WHERE?

For the vestibular screening, you can visit the **Flemish reference centres** of Child and Family (Kind en Gezin). An overview of all reference centres is listed on the website.

www.VIS-Flanders.be/en/reference-centres

WHEN?

In consultation with your reference centre, where the hearing loss was confirmed, an appointment will be scheduled for the vestibular screening at the age of **six months**.

QUESTIONS?

If you still have questions about this vestibular screening, don't hesitate to contact your treating physician or audiologist. The website also provides extra background information and contact details of the reference centres.

www.VIS-Flanders.be/en/



FLEMISH

VESTIBULAR SCREENING

IN HEARING-IMPAIRED

INFANTS



Dear parent,

Recently, your child is being followed because of a hearing loss. Because of the close anatomical relationship between the auditory (hearing) and vestibular (balance) organs, we strongly recommend a screening of the vestibular organ for your baby in a reference centre of Child and Family (Kind en Gezin). This vestibular screening ensures an early detection of possible vestibular problems. This brochure will briefly explain this test.

WHAT?

Vestibular Infant Screening-Flanders (VIS-Flanders) is financially supported by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). This project investigates the vestibular function in Flemish hearing-impaired children at the age of six months by using a **standard screening tool**.



Vestibular screening in a normal hearing baby.

WHY?

Hearing-impaired children have a **higher risk** for deficits of the vestibular organ. Is it possible that the complete vestibular organ does not function on both sides, but more often only a part of the vestibular organ is affected.

When the vestibular organ is completely or partially affected, the other (still intact) parts of the vestibular organ and/or the other sense organs (e.g. seeing and feeling) can take over the vestibular function to a certain extent. Therefore, the impact depends on the extensiveness and severity of the problem.

A **total** loss of the vestibular function will primarily delay the acquisition of the motor milestones (e.g. head control, rolling, sitting, standing and walking).

If the problem is limited to a **part** of the vestibular organ, the impact on the development of the child will be less pronounced. In this case, an evaluation of the motor development by a physiotherapist is also recommended.

This early vestibular screening aims to detect possible problems at a young age. If necessary, **early therapy** can be started to limit, as much as possible, the impact of a vestibular problem on the development of the child.

How?

The cervical Vestibular Evoked Myogenic Potential (cVEMP) test will be used to perform this vestibular screening.

Purpose

This test investigates an important part of the vestibular organ which is essential to develop the first motor milestones. The cVEMP will reveal the majority of the vestibular problems in children.

Preparation

In advance, the skin will be cleaned in order to place recording electrodes on the forehead, the sternum and both neck muscles.

Testing

Your child will be placed on the back, while the head will be turned towards the left and the right side. During this position, a sound will be presented by holding a small vibrating device behind the ear. At the level of the recording electrodes in the neck, responses of the vestibular organ to these sound vibrations will be measured. Obviously, you may be present during the test and distract your baby with some toys.

Result

This test has a duration of about 15 minutes. In case of a vestibular problem, the physician or audiologist will refer your child to a rehabilitation centre or a private physiotherapist in your neighborhood for further motor assessment.