

What is a BER Test?

BER stands for Brainstem Evoked Response. We are recording the activity from your child's ear and hearing nerve in response to a sound. We attach 3 wires to your child (forehead and behind each ear) and a soft earphone in their ear canal to pick up this activity. It is a painless and non-invasive test.

Why does my child need a BER Test?

Many times children are unable to perform a standard hearing test. This can be due to the age of the child or their level of cooperation.

- If the audiologist feels that accurate results cannot be obtained through a standard hearing test, a BER test will be recommended.
- This test takes place at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego, not at the outpatient clinics.
- You will be given instructions on the specific location for parking and check in.

Will my child require sedation?

The BER test is very sensitive to muscle activity (movement and tension). Therefore a successful BER requires that your child be asleep. Children 12 months or older will require sedation for the BER test. We use a medicine given by mouth called Chloral Hydrate. Chloral Hydrate is a moderate sedative that will help your child fall into a natural sleep. It is not anesthesia.

What can I do to make the BER Test a success?

- 1) The number one thing you can do to make the test a success is make sure your child arrives sleepy.
 - Put your child to bed late the night before the test (typically midnight) and wake him/her very early the morning of the test (typically 4 am).
 - **Don't let him/her take naps or sleep in the car on the way to the test (not even for 5 minutes).**
 - Bring a comforting blanket or toy from home to help your child fall asleep. You will be with your child the entire time.
- 2) If your child will be getting sedation for the BER test, specific instructions will be given to you on what they can eat or drink before the appointment.
 - Chloral Hydrate *must* be given on an empty stomach. Therefore we ask that you stop giving solid foods, milk (formula, breast milk, regular milk, or any other milk) and juice six hours* before your appointment. Clear liquids (**clear apple juice, Gatorade, Pedialyte and water only**) are allowed between six and two hours before your appointment.
 - **For the two hours right before the appointment, do not give your child anything.** This will allow the Chloral Hydrate to work quickly and be safe for your child.
 - If you do not follow the food/drink guidelines, we will not be able to use the Chloral Hydrate and your appointment will be rescheduled.
- 3) Your child must be healthy!
 - Please cancel the appointment if your child has had a fever in the last 24 hours, congestion, upper respiratory infection, pneumonia, flu, cough, diarrhea, ear infection, or ear drainage.
 - If your child is prone to wax in their ears, has lots of ear infections, or recent ear tube placement, please see your ear doctor (ENT) 1-2 days before the appointment to make sure ears are free of wax and fluid.
- 4) A nurse practitioner (NP) will evaluate your child to make sure they are healthy before giving the medicine. If the NP does not feel your child is healthy enough, we will have to reschedule the appointment.

When will I know the results?

The audiologist who performs the BER test will most likely be able to give you the results at the end of your appointment. Only rarely does the test require further analysis before results can be given.

* Babies 0-6 months of age can have breast milk or formula up to four hours prior to their appointment.