

EDITORIAL

World Hearing Day is held on 3 March each year to raise awareness on how to prevent deafness and hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care across the world. WHO invites all stakeholders to join this global initiative. With the theme “Hear the future”, World Hearing Day 2018 will draw attention to the anticipated increase in the number of people with hearing loss around the world in the coming decades.

It will focus on preventive strategies to stem the rise and outline steps to ensure access to the necessary rehabilitation services and communication tools and products for people with hearing loss.

Most children hear and listen to sounds at birth. They learn to talk by imitating the sounds they hear around them and the voices of their parents and caregivers. But that’s not true for all children. In fact, about two or three out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with detectable hearing loss in one or both ears. More lose hearing later during childhood.

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Because of the need for prompt identification of and intervention for childhood hearing loss, universal newborn hearing screening programs currently operate.

The most important time for a child to learn language is in the first 3 years of life, when the brain is developing and maturing. In fact, children begin learning speech and language in the first 6 months of life. Research suggests that children with hearing loss who get help early develop better language skills than those who don’t.

Hearing of the newborn should be screened before he or she leaves the hospital or birthing center. Two different tests are used to screen for hearing loss in babies. Otoacoustic emissions (OAE) test whether some parts of the ear respond to sound. During this test, a soft earphone is inserted into baby’s ear canal. It plays sounds and measures an “echo” response that occurs in ears with normal hearing. If there is no echo, baby might have hearing loss.

The auditory brain stem response (ABR) tests how the auditory nerve and brain stem (which carry sound from the ear to the brain) respond to sound. During this test, baby wears small earphones and has electrodes painlessly placed on his or her head. The electrodes adhere and come off like stickers and should not cause discomfort.

If the results show that baby may have hearing loss follow-up exam should be done by the time baby is 3 months old. The audiologist will conduct tests to determine whether baby has a hearing problem and, if so, the type and severity of that problem.

Depending on a baby’s hearing loss and communication needs, some of the devices and tools may help to maximize his or her communication skills. These devices are: Hearing Aids, Cochlear Implant and Assistive devices.

On 22nd of February 22, 2018 first hearing screening camp was conducted at LGH, Lahore. Otoacoustic Emission was made available along with tympanometry. It will be a recurring feature.

It has been possible through the cooperation of Department of Pediatrics and ENT of PGMI-AMC/LGH, Lahore.

This is the beginning of a path leading to complete rehabilitation program including cochlear implant at PGMI-AMC/LGH, Lahore.

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