

# Rocky Mountain Pediatric ENT Associates

PATIENT: \_\_\_\_\_

SURGEON: \_\_\_\_\_



## THE DIAGNOSTIC ABR

An ABR stands for Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR). An ABR is a tool to determine how a child's hearing nerve responds to different sounds. The test is completed by using sticky electrodes on the child's head to measure a brain wave in response to sounds presented through earphones. The electrodes are connected to a computer to determine the presence of the hearing brain wave at various loudness levels including the softest level that the wave is present. This method is performed at different frequencies or pitches. The hearing brain wave is very small and body noise needs to be canceled out to efficiently and reliably determine the presence of the wave within a normal range. This is why it is important for your child to be sleeping throughout testing. Results from the ABR test, along with other measures, will help the audiologist determine if your child has normal hearing or a hearing loss.

## ABR FACTS:



- The ABR test measures the hearing nerve's response to sounds up to the level of the brainstem.
- An ABR test is often completed if a newborn refers on the newborn hearing screening given in the hospital shortly after birth, or for older children if conventional hearing tests cannot be completed and there is concern for a hearing loss.
- The ABR test is safe and noninvasive.
- The ABR test can be completed only if the child is sleeping or lying perfectly still, relaxed and with his or her eyes closed.
- If your child is younger than 6 months, the ABR test usually can be done while sleeping.
- For children older than 6 months, the ABR test is done under anesthesia. Information regarding ABR testing under anesthesia would be discussed with a physician.
- The test itself takes about 1 hour to 1.5 hours, but the entire appointment will take about 2 hours.



## HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE ABR:

The most important way to prepare your baby for the ABR is to bring him/her tired and hungry. A very young baby will typically sleep throughout the entire test when they are brought tired and hungry. Try to keep your baby awake and hold off feeding until you arrive to the appointment. Sometimes the trickiest part is the car ride to the office. If possible, you could bring someone along to the appointment so they may sit in the back of the car and keep the child awake. Once you are in the testing room and your child has been prepped for the test, you can nurse or feed your baby a bottle so he or she falls asleep naturally. The test will take place while your child sleeps in your arms or in a car seat, which-ever is most comfortable for you and your baby. The test is completed in a quiet room. It is best to not bring siblings or other young children along to the appointment due to the long test time needed in a quiet room. If siblings do accompany you to the appointment, please bring another adult so they may wait in the waiting room and play with the toys out there.