

# Learning About Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening



## What is ASD screening?

Screening tests help your doctor look for a condition before any symptoms appear. Doctors use a set of questions to screen for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children. Parents usually answer the questions at a well-child visit.

The questions cover how your child talks, moves, and interacts with others. The answers help your doctor understand how your child is developing. They let the doctor see if there are signs of a problem that might be related to ASD.

ASD screenings are important. Finding signs of ASD early can help families get connected to resources and make a personalized treatment plan. And those things can help children reach their full potential.

## When should your child be tested?

Screening for ASD is usually done at a child's 18-month and 24-month well-child visits. But some children are at a higher risk for ASD. This includes children who have a sibling with ASD or who have a genetic condition such as fragile X syndrome. These children may need more screening and need to be screened more often.

If you don't think your child has been screened for ASD, ask your doctor to do a screening test.

## How is the test done?

The doctor will give you a set of questions. The questions focus on specific behaviors your child may or may not do. For example, you may be asked if your child shows you things by pointing to them. Or you may be asked if your child tries to copy what you do.

The doctor will go over the results of the test with you. He or she will discuss any concerns or other testing that may be done.

## What happens after the test?

If the doctor thinks that your child may have ASD, he or she may refer you to a specialist. These may include:

- A developmental pediatrician.
- A neuropsychologist.
- A psychiatrist.
- A psychologist.

Your child may also see other specialists, such as a speech or occupational therapist.

The specialist will do a complete evaluation. This may include more questions and observation. It may also include genetic, vision, and hearing tests. These tests can help show if a developmental delay is related to ASD or not. They can also help find other problems, such as a language delay.

Your doctor may also talk to you about early intervention services. All families can get these services. They give children support in the areas they need.

If your child is diagnosed with ASD, early treatment can help your child live the best life possible.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your child's treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if your child is having problems. It's also a good idea to know your child's test results and keep a list of the medicines your child takes.

## Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://kp.org/health>

Enter **A360** in the search box to learn more about **"Learning About Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening"**.

Current as of: September 23, 2020