



Non-sedated ABR techniques

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Vivosonic Inc., Toronto, Canada
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integrity

Presentation outline

- Brief review of ABR role in pediatric hearing assessment
- The need for Non-sedated ABR
- Non-sedated ABR techniques
 - Technological
 - Protocols
 - Test administration
- Conclusions



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Year 2007 JCIH Position Statement endorsed ABR as a major tool for post-screening audiological assessment

Audiological assessment from **birth to 6 months** of age should include:

- **Frequency-specific ABR** with **air-conducted** and **bone-conducted tone bursts** – to determine the degree and configuration of HL in each ear for fitting of amplification devices.
- **Click-evoked ABR** with **condensation** and **rarefaction** polarity stimulus if there are indicators of neural HL – to determine if a cochlear microphonic is present, and all infants who demonstrate “no response” on tone-burst ABR.

For subsequent testing of infants and toddlers at **6 – 36 months** of age the confirmatory test battery should include:

- **ABR** if responses to behavioral audiometry are not reliable or if ABR testing has not been performed in the past.

PEDIATRICS Volume 120, Number 4, October 2007

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ABR is widely recommended and used in audiological assessment of infants and young children

Extensive literature exists on pediatric ABR, e.g.:

- Berlin, C.
- Cone-Wesson, B.
- Don, M.
- Gorga, M.
- Hall, J.
- Hood, L.
- Hyde, M.
- Picton, T.
- Shallop, J.
- Sininger, Y.
- Stapells, D.



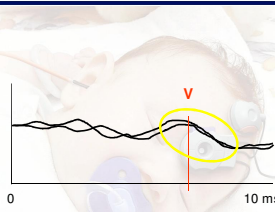
PEDIATRICS Volume 120, Number 4, October 2007



4

Hearing threshold estimation is the most common use of ABR in post-screening audiological assessment

- Frequency-specific
- Stimuli are tone bursts: 500, 1000, 2000, 4000 Hz, as needed for HA fitting
- Challenges:
 - Very small signal at threshold, difficult to recognize
 - Response at threshold can be masked acoustically in noisy test environments
 - Inter-subject response variability
 - Inter-tester response interpretation variability
 - Wave V is not always well expressed, especially at 500 Hz
 - No latency norms, as for click-ABR
 - If retro-cochlear pathways are involved, Wave V may be absent and thus cannot be used for threshold estimation.



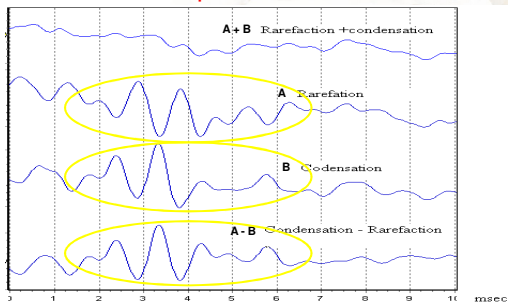
Multiple publications by Jay Hall III, Yvonne Sininger, David Stapells, and others.



5

Condensation and rarefaction click ABR – an essential tool for detecting Cochlear Microphonic for AN/AD

Example of CM in AN/AD

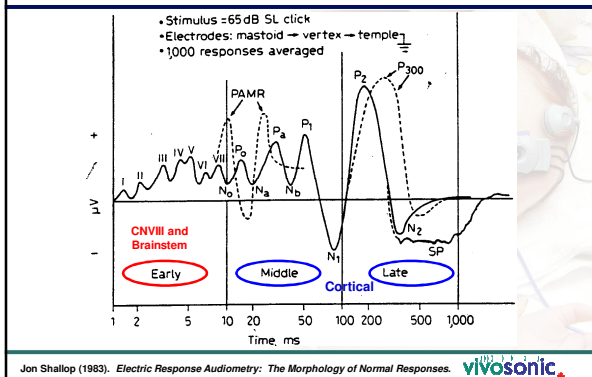


From: Talbot et al. (2009). Prevalence of Auditory Neuropathy (AN) among infants and young children with severe to profound hearing loss. (in press).



6

ABR is the smallest transient Auditory Evoked Potential – 0.1-0.5 microvolt amplitude – easily masked by artifacts & interferences



Physiological artifacts and extraneous interferences contaminate ABR signal, particularly at threshold

Physiological artifacts – from the patient

- Brain
- Eyes
- Skeletal muscles
- Heart (in infants)

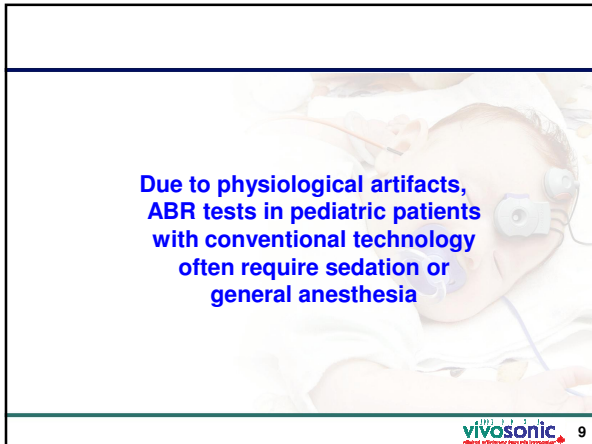
Non-physiological from the patient
– pacemakers (adults)

Extraneous interferences – from the environment

- Electric and magnetic fields
- Radio-frequency transmissions
- Conducted power-line
50 / 60 Hz & harmonics

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Due to physiological artifacts, ABR tests in pediatric patients with conventional technology often require sedation or general anesthesia



2006 AAP & AAPD Guidelines for monitoring and management of pediatric patients during and after sedation for diagnostic and therapeutic procedures

PEDIATRICS

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Guidelines for Monitoring and Management of Pediatric Patients During and After Sedation for Diagnostic and Therapeutic Procedures: An Update
American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Charles J. Cote, Stephen Wilson and the Work Group on Sedation
Pediatrics 2006;118:2587-2602
DOI: 10.1542/peds.2006-2780

This information is current as of January 4, 2007

PEDIATRICS Volume 118, Number 6, December 2006

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/118/6/2587>

<http://aapolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/pediatrics.118/6/2587.pdf>



10

The AAP & AAPD Guidelines: Sedation imposes serious risks on the child. Monitoring & rapid intervention readiness required.

Sedation of pediatric patients has serious associated risks, such as hypoventilation, apnea, airway obstruction, laryngospasm, and cardiopulmonary impairment.^{2,6,32,45,46,54,60-69} These adverse responses during and after sedation for a diagnostic or therapeutic procedure may be minimized, but not completely eliminated, by a careful preprocedure review of the patient's underlying medical conditions and consideration of how the sedation process might affect or be affected by these conditions.⁵⁴ Appropriate drug selection for the intended procedure as well as the presence of an individual with the skills needed to rescue a patient from an adverse response are essential. Appropriate physiologic monitoring and continuous observation by personnel not directly involved with the procedure allow for accurate and rapid diagnosis of complications and initiation of appropriate rescue interventions.^{46,51,54}

PEDIATRICS Volume 118, Number 6, December 2006



11

ABR under anesthesia is administered in the OR, involves Audiologists and Anesthetists, is costly, unavailable in many clinics, and may affect the timeliness of diagnostics and intervention (reaching the 1-3-6 targets)



Photo: Courtesy of Dr. Jay Hall, III, Ph.D., University of Florida, Gainesville, FL



12

Moreover, recent findings suggest general anesthesia may affect child development. More studies required

- Early research suggests a possible link between exposure to general anesthesia in infancy and early childhood and behavioral and developmental disorders later on.
- Children in the study exposed to general anesthesia were twice as likely as unexposed children to be diagnosed with such disorders.
- After adjusting for factors associated with behavioral and developmental disorders, including low birth weight and gender, the researchers concluded that children with a history of exposure to general anesthesia were nearly twice as likely to have a recognized developmental or behavioral disorder as children with no exposure.
- The findings are preliminary and must be confirmed.

These findings were presented at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Anesthesiologists in Orlando, FL by Dr. Lena S. Sun, MD, Columbia University, NYC.

Source: *Advance for Speech-Language pathologists and Audiologists*, November 24, 2008  13

The risks and costs of sedation and anesthesia evoke the need of the new, non-sedated ABR techniques and the goal of their development

Both sedation and general anesthesia may present health or developmental risks to children.

Significant additional costs to health care system:

- Sedation: \$500-800 / case
- Non-complicated anesthesia: \$4,000-5,000 / case
- Complicated anesthesia (10% cases): \$10,000-20,000 / case

Therefore, administering ABR without sedation and anesthesia is needed from both patient-care and healthcare cost perspectives.

Avoiding the risks associated with sedation and anesthesia, in as many cases as possible, is the goal of the new ABR techniques.

 14

ABR is particularly challenging in the NICU due to large EMIs from life-support equipment



Extensive electric wiring, CRT monitors, respiratory-equipment pumps, heaters, etc. emit significant EMI's.

However, being life-support, this equipment cannot be switched off for ABR!



The goal of non-sedated ABR is achieved by combining *technological advancements* with *clinical protocols* and *test-administering practices*

Technological advancements

- In-situ pre-amplification and pre-filtering
- Wireless recording
- Kalman-weighted averaging
- Real-time noise estimate with A, B, and A-B traces, and meaningful correlation coefficient

Clinical protocols

- Increased number of equivalent / accepted sweeps
- Increased stimulus rate
- Stimulus rate close to 40/sec to utilize 40-Hz response in AWAKE children

Test administration practices

- Positioning the child in a (perceived by the child) safe & friendly environment
- Comforting by caregivers
- Pacifying infants – breast-feeding, bottle, pacifier
- Occupying toddlers & older children – games, videos, drawing

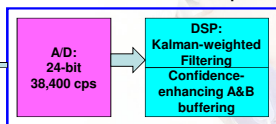
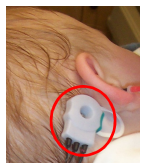
Technological advancements for ABR recording in non-sedated patients

Technological advancements reduce physiological artifacts & environmental interferences enabling non-sedated ABR

In-situ amplification – on the ground electrode – protects from EMI

High-resolution A/D conversion – increases the accuracy of ABR

Kalman-weighted filtering in DSP – removes EMG artifacts. Confidence-enhancing A & B buffering – enhances confidence of ABR trace repeatability & correlation



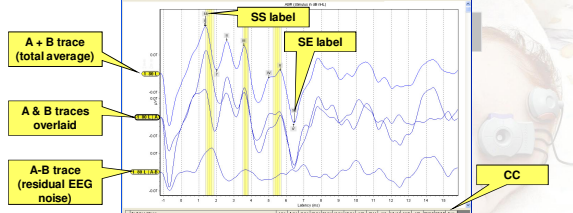
Wireless interface – eliminates conducted power-line noises

Band-pass filtering prior to amplification – eliminates EOG, ECG and EEG artifacts, and RF interference

Real-time statistics – for repeatability confidence



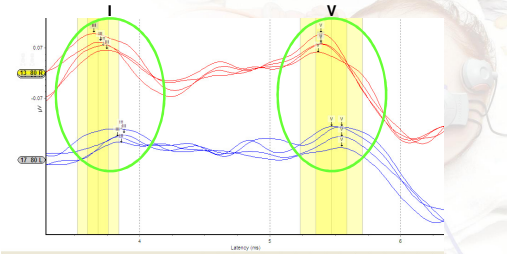
Statistical techniques enhance confidence in response repeatability



A (even sweeps) & **B** (odd sweeps) buffers show response repeatability within each test run – instead of repeating each test – and saves test time.
A-B (the difference between A and B) shows EEG noise floor – helps identify the response.
 Correlation coefficient (**CC**) between **Statistics Start (SS)** and **Statistics End (SE)** labels – helps detecting response objectively.

High-definition ABR enables detecting very small inter-aural differences of ABR wave latencies

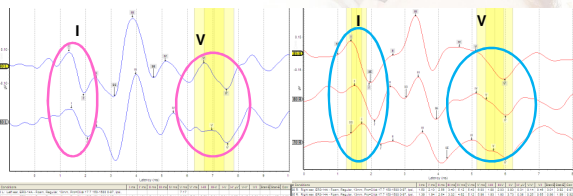
ABR waveforms recorded from a 79-year-old patient with moderate SNHL, showing clear inter-aural differences in Waves III and V



Test Conditions	Latency (ms)	Amplitude (µV)	Wave	Wave Ratio	Wave Ratio Error	Wave Ratio Error Error	Wave Ratio Error Error Error	Wave Ratio Error Error Error Error	Wave Ratio Error Error Error Error Error
10 dB, Left ear, 800 Hz, 1000 Hz, 1500 Hz, 2000 Hz, 3000 Hz, 4000 Hz, 5000 Hz, 6000 Hz, 7000 Hz, 8000 Hz, 9000 Hz, 10000 Hz	1.00	0.50	III	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10 dB, Left ear, 800 Hz, 1000 Hz, 1500 Hz, 2000 Hz, 3000 Hz, 4000 Hz, 5000 Hz, 6000 Hz, 7000 Hz, 8000 Hz, 9000 Hz, 10000 Hz	1.50	0.50	V	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10 dB, Right ear, 800 Hz, 1000 Hz, 1500 Hz, 2000 Hz, 3000 Hz, 4000 Hz, 5000 Hz, 6000 Hz, 7000 Hz, 8000 Hz, 9000 Hz, 10000 Hz	1.00	0.50	III	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10 dB, Right ear, 800 Hz, 1000 Hz, 1500 Hz, 2000 Hz, 3000 Hz, 4000 Hz, 5000 Hz, 6000 Hz, 7000 Hz, 8000 Hz, 9000 Hz, 10000 Hz	1.50	0.50	V	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

High-definition ABR helps identifying subtle variances that may increase the diagnostic value of ABR

ABRs from LE of a 5-week-old, 8-week-premature, non-sedated, female NICU infant 80 and 90 dB nHL (shown are age norms for 80 dB nHL)
 ABRs from RE of a 3.5-year-old, non-sedated male patient with Cerebral Palsy 70, 80, 85 dB nHL (shown are age norms for 80 dB nHL)



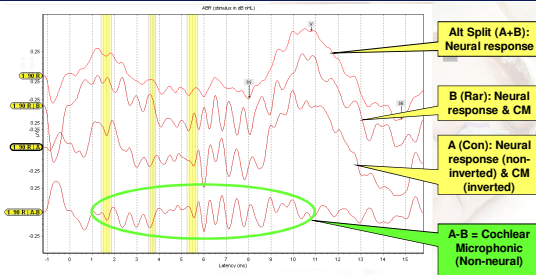
ABR indicates similarity of Wave V/I Ratio in premature and 3.5-year-old CP patient

New statistical techniques provide the clinician with good stop criteria to obtain meaningful results

The clinician can stop the test based on the following Integrity™ criteria:

- A and B traces are **visually** repeatable
- A-B trace, which represents the residual **noise**, is **visually** flatter than the A+B (total average) trace
- **Correlation Coefficient** in the latency range of interest is larger than 0.5 (50%), which indicates a non-random response, preferably larger than 0.75 (75%)

Alternating Split stimulus automatically administers Condensation (A) and Rarefaction (B) polarity clicks for CM identification in neural HL

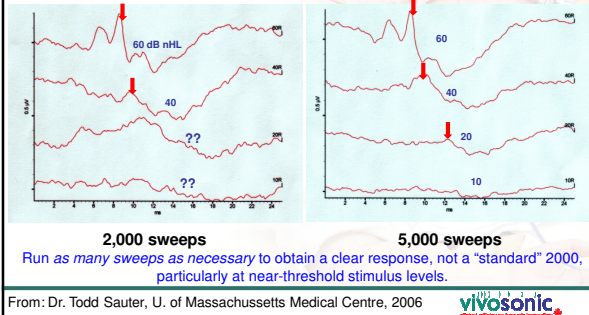


Right Ear of a 4-year-old boy with Auditory Neuropathy/Auditory Dys-synchrony. Left Ear with Cochlear Implant (CI). Candidate for a second CI for the Right Ear. 90 dB nHL click: A – Con, B – Rar, A+B – Neural, A-B – Non-neural (Cochlear Microphonic, CM)

Clinical approaches to ABR recording in AWAKE pediatric patients

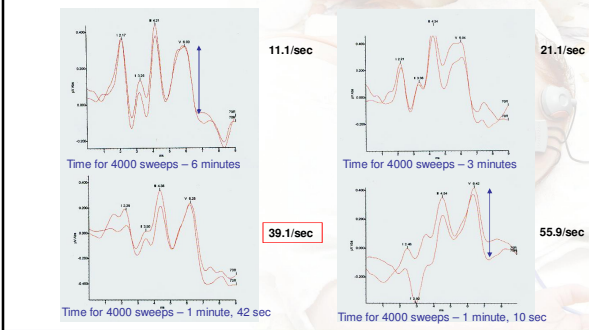
Using larger numbers of stimuli (sweeps) near threshold improves response clarity and helps ABR detection

Examples of click-ABR under the same conditions recorded with different number of accepted sweeps



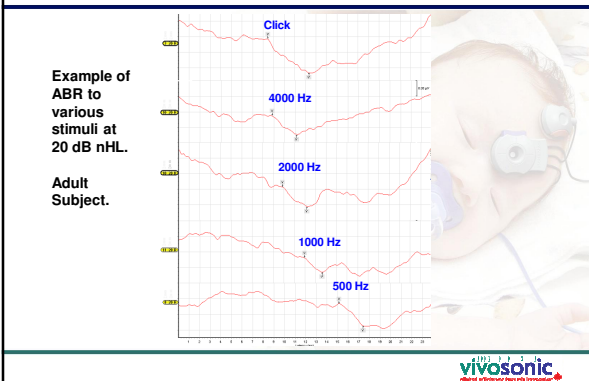
From: Dr. Todd Sauter, U. of Massachusetts Medical Centre, 2006

Stimulus rate affects wave morphology, but not Wave V amplitude. High stimulus rates save testing time



Dr. Todd Sauter, University of Massachusetts Medical Centre, 2006

Use window long enough to include full negative deflection following Wave V (Wave V' or SN10), particularly for low frequency stimuli

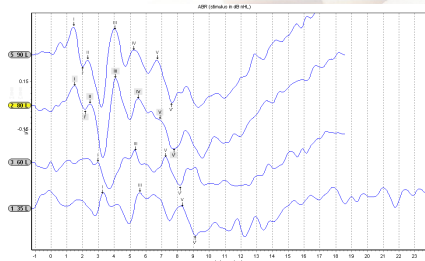


Test NICU babies in their incubators – this will eliminate the disturbance of moving out of the incubator and sound-proof from the NICU noise



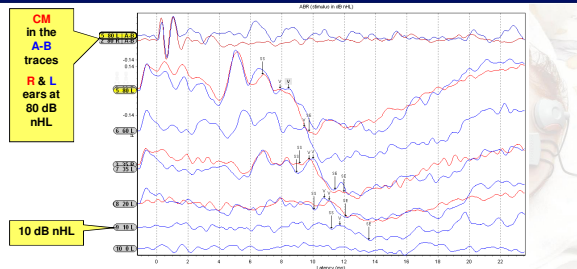
When testing in an NICU or Step Down Unit, the wireless interface unit is placed in or on the incubator, and the test is administered from an up to 30-foot (10 meter) distance. Shown: Administering ABR in a premature, 10-days old (gestational 31 weeks) female patient in the NICU incubator

Allow NICU babies for suckling on their pacifiers, remain in their natural position, and minimize other disturbances



Non-sedated, premature 10-week-old infant girl, in a NICU, suckling on her pacifier. Conventional ABR results unattainable. New techniques enabled recording clear ABR to 35-90 dB nHL clicks.

New techniques enable the recording of clear ABR and CM in non-sedated NICU infants



10-days old, premature (31-week gestational) infant girl, was impossible to test with a conventional ABR device due to very large artifacts. Clear response: clickABR to 0-80 dB nHL, R (red) & L (blue) ears.

Wide high-pass filtering (30-1500 Hz) utilize not only Wave V, but also 40-Hz response in AWAKE patients

A-B traces at all stimulus levels match the 0 dB nHL (no stimulus) trace, i.e. EEG noise

"Running" CC

Stimulus Level (dB nHL)	Latency (ms)	Amplitude (µV)
500 Hz	~100	~200
1000 Hz	~100	~200
...

The user runs a test until A-B "flattens out" to below 0.03-0.05 µV. "Running" CC value is continuously updated, and CC > 0.5 indicates the presence of response, as in this sample 500 Hz tone-burst ABR clearly identifiable to 10 dB nHL.

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ABR can be recorded in non-sedated infants down to 0-10 dB nHL (nHL stimulus levels calibrated for adults)

500 Hz

1000 Hz

2000 Hz

Click

4-wks old boy, intermittent sleep, pacifier

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Bottle- or breastfeeding & known environment, like the child's car seat or stroller, help keeping awake infants quiet

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Comforting infants by the parent or care-giver is helps keeping the infant quiet



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Testing newborns and infants is very patient- and parent-friendly in comforting hands of the parent or care-giver



When testing newborns and infants, VivoLink™ is placed in the crib or a car seat, or held by the caregiver. The caregiver can comfort the child during the test, while the child can be bottle-feeding or even breast-feeding.

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Feeding on the bottle helps not only in infants, but in many toddlers



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A position where the child feels safe may work better than sedation in some cases



A 2-year-old female toddler was given 5 cc of Chloral Hydrate, then another 2 cc – with no sedative effect. ABR could not be completed with a conventional ABR system.

Then she found safety on her father's shoulders where she was successfully ABR-tested with new techniques.

Tests conducted at a private Otolaryngology clinic, Cairo, Egypt

Photos: Courtesy of Dr. Sameh Farheed



Holding the child's hands in a safe position doesn't allow her to use the hands for removing the electrodes and inserts



Positioning the wireless unit as a "backpack" makes it invisible to the child and reduce the child's fear of the procedure



A good way to keep an older child "quiet" is to occupy the child with watching a cartoon, toys, drawing, games

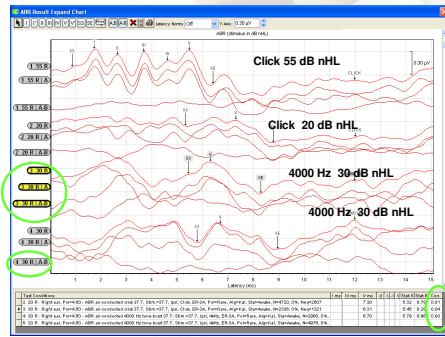


VivoLink™ attracted the 3-year-old female patient and allowed for a faster test.

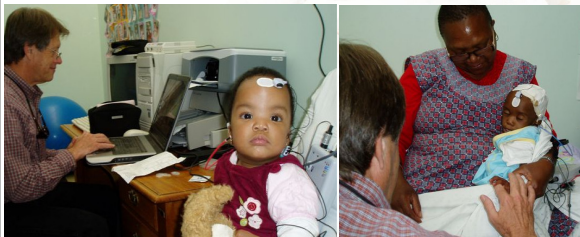


ehehehe

Example of ABR to click & 4000 Hz tone burst.
4-year-old girl, drawing during the test.



Non-sedated capability is particularly helpful in developing countries with limited anesthesia facilities



ABR tests conducted in non-sedated infants and young children at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Photos: Courtesy of Dr. Jay Hall, III, Ph.D., and Dr. De Wet Swanepoel, Ph.D. 42 does not mean their endorsement of the new techniques.

Very important is to keep acoustically quiet during a threshold ABR test, as background acoustic noise elevates thresholds by masking!

- Test in a quiet room in the clinic, but not necessarily booth
- Switch off devices that can produce acoustic noise – fans, ventilators, etc.
- Instruct parents and caregivers, and other staff to restrain from talking and producing noises otherwise near the patient
- Ensure good occlusion of the inserts

Survey of Audiologists using new ABR technology found the quality of non-sedated ABR largely at par with sedated conventional ABR

Respondents who are using the new techniques on more than half of cases requiring an ABR have found:

- It had positive overall impact on patient during diagnostic tests 48%
- Chose the new technology for the quality of diagnostic tests 90%
- The test quality was on par with Sedated ABR's 61%
- New technology helps to test a wider range of patients 70%

Conclusions

- New techniques enable practical ABR evaluation in non-sedated pediatric patients.
- The quality of Non-sedated ABR obtained with the new techniques is largely at par with sedated ABR using conventional equipment.
- New techniques can be effectively used in electro-magnetically challenging environments like Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) and enable timely delivery of audiological assessment to the NICU population.
- By eliminating the need of sedation and anesthesia in most cases, new techniques can reduce time-to-service timeline, reduce the age of identification, and help achieving the 1-3-6 EHDl goals.

Acknowledgements

The authors are very grateful to the many researchers, clinicians, and AuD students who pioneered, clinically use, and provided invaluable feedback and shared their experiences with the use of new ABR techniques in non-sedated pediatric patients:

Drs. Jay Hall, Todd Sauter, De Wet Swanepoel, Roger Ruth, Dianne Meyers, Lynn Spivak, Sharon Fujikawa Brooks, Thierry Morlet, Yehuda, Holdstein, Ben Sierra

Audiologists Leslie Wexler, Michelle Dubé, Scott Hanson, Hannah Alexander, Friedel Cunningham, Stella Gershkovich,

Thank you
for your interest

Best wishes
from
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Questions?
