



Information for
patients and
carers

**What to expect when using a hearing
aid**

How a hearing aid works

Digital hearing aids work by amplifying sounds from the environment and transferring them to the ear. Hearing aids have a microphone that picks up sounds, an amplifier and a receiver that sends the amplified sounds into the ear through the earmould. Modern hearing aids amplify quieter sounds more than louder sounds so that they always stay within the child's comfortable hearing range.

The audiologist will choose the correct hearing aid for your child using the results of the hearing test which was completed at your last appointment and discussing any considerations with you. Your child may be fitted with one (unilateral) or two hearing aids (binaural).

Modern digital hearing aids have features that mean they will be programmed to match your child's deafness. The most common types of hearing aid worn by children are behind-the-ear (BTE) hearing aids, also known as post-aural aids. They can be fitted to people of all ages and are suitable for very young babies upwards.

There are also hearing aids that work by vibration, known as bone conduction hearing aids. This type of hearing aid changes the sound from an acoustic signal into a mechanical signal (vibration). The receiver is a small vibrating pad that allows sound to be conducted through the bone rather than through the outer and middle ear.

Your audiologist will program the appropriate type of hearing aid(s) using the most recent hearing test, before testing them either in a test box or in your child's ear to make sure that the signal coming from the hearing aid matches your child's deafness as closely as possible. For more information on different types of aids such as Bone conduction aids, CROS or BI CROS aids, Open fit hearing aids or Cochlear Implants please speak to the Audiologist, Consultant or you can look at the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) website: www.ndcs.org.uk

New aid users

It is important to remember that the hearing aids do not replace normal hearing but enable your child to have access to the sounds that the rest of us hear. Some children may not have heard at this level before, and it may take them some time to acclimatise.

Some things to remember when starting the hearing aid journey with your child:

Be patient

Make sure you allow your child time to get used to the sound and the way the aid feels in the ear. Bear in mind that some sounds may seem different to your child to what they are used to. You may have to help them to learn to identify sounds again. Note that in time they will get accustomed to the sounds in their environment.

Routine

Try making the hearing aids part of your child's dressing and undressing routine. Put the hearing aids in when they get up and take them out at night. An important part of acclimatisation is to make the hearing device a normal part of everyday life, in the same way as a pair of shoes or glasses.

Time

It is important for your child to use the aids on a regular daily basis to adapt and to thrive with their hearing aid. Remember, even if they wear it for a few seconds at a time to start, this is an improvement and a step in the right direction. Continue with acclimatisation and de-sensitisation activities if they find some situations difficult, and the length of time they can wear the hearing device will increase.

Listening fatigue

If using the hearing aid makes your child feel tired, take them off for a little while and have a rest. Remember that they will be processing a lot

more information than they are accustomed to. Gradually your child will begin to be able to listen for longer periods of time. Soon, they will be able to wear their hearing aids comfortably all day long.

Consider environments

Start in quieter surroundings; gradually build up to noisier settings. Expect your child to be aware of traffic sounds, wind noise and voices from a distance. This can be distracting initially, so be mindful of them when walking near to roads or in busy situations.

Experiment

Try the aids out with your child in different places, if possible ask them what they hear or see how they react to situations to see where and when the aid(s) work best for them.

Ear Moulds

Hold the earmould(s) in your hand for a couple of minutes before trying to put them in. This makes them warmer, softer, easier to put in and more comfortable.

Comfort

If you notice your child removing their hearing aids after loud noises or because their ears hurt, or if your baby blinks often when they are listening to sounds around them, check the settings on the aids and talk to your child's audiologist or teacher of the Deaf.

Whistling aids

Your child's aid(s) may whistle when you feed them or when they are lying down. This is called feedback, and it happens because the microphone on the aids is close to something solid. Arranging pillows behind your child, holding them in a different position or temporarily turning their aids down while they are feeding can help.

Listen to radio or TV

When listening to the TV or the radio, start out by listening to news commentators since they usually speak clearly, then try other programs. If you find it difficult to listen to TV or radio, you may want to contact the RNID or Connevans for more information on loop systems or assistive listening devices.

Keep records

Make sure you keep a note of any questions or concerns you may have to go through with the Audiologist at the next session.

Communication tips



- Encourage your child to face the person who is speaking

- When talking to a child get down to their level, if your child is sitting on the floor and you are standing, your voice may not be directed at them
- Do not try to converse from a different room or with your back turned. It is easier to hear what people say when you can see what they are saying
- Visual clues like facial expressions and lip movements help listeners better understand conversations
- Stand or sit where the speakers face is well lit. This makes it easier to see facial expressions and mouth movements
- Try not to talk while chewing or eating. It makes it harder to understand what is being said, and almost impossible for others to see your mouth and face as you speak
- Do not talk while reading the newspaper, or lean your cheek on your hand while talking, as this will also make lip reading difficult for others
- You do not need to shout. It is perfectly fine to speak at a normal conversational volume when talking with someone who wears hearing instruments. Most instruments are programmed to amplify a normal level of speech, so if you shout, it may be too loud, or sound distorted to the listener
- Try not to talk too fast. Speak naturally but try to pronounce your words more clearly. This will naturally slow your speech, but be careful not to overdo it
- If you are having trouble being understood, try rephrasing your sentence rather than just repeating yourself
- When you are in a group, take turns at talking, and try not to interrupt each other. If the conversation changes suddenly, try to inform the person with the hearing loss; knowing the subject of the conversation makes it much easier to follow and participate
- Try to reduce background noise. For someone who has a hearing loss, the most difficult listening environment is background noise

Voices are difficult to hear because they are in competition with all the other noise

The following are some suggestions that may help:

- Try to eliminate background noise when having a conversation
- Turn off the television and close any open windows to reduce any noise from traffic
- Move closer to your listener so your voice is louder than the background noise. This will also make your face and lips more visible
- Alternatively, try to find somewhere quieter to talk

Remember

- Do what you can to make lip reading possible
- Talk face-to-face
- Speak at a natural pace
- Learn the Clear Speech technique (www.sense.org.uk)
- Try to eliminate background noise

Avoiding heat, humidity and chemicals

Your hearing aid must never be exposed to extreme heat e.g. left inside a parked car in the sun.

Although water resistant, care should still be taken. They should not be exposed to a lot of moisture e.g. swimming or showers.

In the event of them getting wet, remove the battery and leave the aid in the drying tub provided; they must never be dried in microwave ovens or other ovens.

Wipe the batteries carefully if moisture is present as it may affect their performance.

The chemicals in cosmetics, hairspray, perfume, aftershave lotion, suntan lotion and insect repellent can damage a hearing aid. You

should always remove your child's hearing aid before applying such products and allow time for the product to dry before refitting the hearing aid. If you use lotion, be sure to wipe your hands dry before putting on your hearing aid.

Newborn Babies

Please be aware of the following considerations for your baby:

1. Due to rapid growth, ear moulds need replacing every 2 weeks initially. Ear mould impression appointments will be booked in advance and may take up to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour
2. The time between taking ear mould impressions will lengthen as growth slows down. Parents/Guardians and Audiologists will review this regularly
3. Ear moulds that are too small may cause whistling. Application of Otoform cream may help until new ear moulds are obtained. Please ask for a supply
4. Excessive wax in ears may also cause whistling. Management options can be discussed with a Consultant Audiological Vestibular Physician, Audiologist or Audiology Specialist Health Visitor
5. Hearing aid fine-tuning will take place every 3-6 months until 2-3 years of age using a measurement of ear canal size (RECD) and/or hearing test results
6. Hearing aid review appointments consist of discussion of baby's reaction to sounds, speech and language development, reporting results of aetiological investigations and reprogramming hearing aids if necessary. Hearing tests will be performed both with and without hearing aids. Impressions will be taken if required. These appointments can take up to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours; please bring baby's food and changing bag
7. If you have any concerns between appointments please speak to your Audiologist, Audiology Specialist Health Visitor or Teacher of the Deaf /Advisory Teacher for Hearing Impaired Children

Sources of further information

Below is a list of sources of both support and information and details of the local groups in the surrounding area. Each group encourages the sharing of ideas and information between parents and gives opportunities for children to meet other children with hearing impairment, helping form friendships and confidence.

RNID (Royal National Institute for the Deaf)

www.rnid.org.uk

Connevans (assistive listening devices and products)

www.connevans.co.uk

C2 Hear Online (Interactive videos on hearing aid use)

www.c2hearonline.com

Oticon (hearing aid manufacture)

www.oticon.co.uk

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

www.ndcs.org.uk

The NDCS is the UK's leading childhood deafness charity in the UK. It provides support, information and advice for deaf children and young people, their parents and carers, extended family members and the professionals who support them. They have lots of online and print resources to help you make informed choices as well as friendly advisers who can answer your questions. The NDCS can help you connect with other families of deaf children through their online and UK-wide in-person events and workshops, online forum for parents called Your Community, and local deaf societies. You can also try out the latest hearing and assistive technology through their loan service.

Contact their free Helpline by going to www.ndcs.org.uk/helpline.

The Buzz:

Web www.ndcsbuzz.org.uk

Email youngmember@ndcs.org.uk

There is a NDCS website “The Buzz” aimed at children and teenagers. This website is to help children make new friends, check out the latest info and chat about things that matter to them. It is monitored and split into 2 age groups: 8-11 years and 12-18 years. There are sections on events, games, getting involved, info and advice and a “Cool Topics” section aimed at promoting a positive identity for children with a hearing loss.

East Lancashire Children's Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG)

East Lancashire Children’s Hearing Services Working Group (CHSWG) is a group made up of different professionals and parents who work with and support children and young people with hearing loss. Some of these children and young people also have other needs. The group works together to ensure that deaf children and their families have good quality local support which meets their needs whilst meeting local and national frameworks and targets. The group provides a forum to acknowledge and address issues arising in children’s hearing services locally as identified by both service users and providers.

East Lancashire CHSWG meets twice a year and are open to new members who are involved in working with young people with hearing loss. The group also invites young people, parents and carers to join the group or to contact the group with any issues they would like to discuss.

Contact Name: Andrea Curran

Contact Position: Paediatric Audiology

Telephone: 01282 805896

Email: andrea.curran@elht.nhs.uk

Website: <https://elht.nhs.uk/.../audiology-paediatric>

Local Deaf Children's Society (DSC) groups

BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE DCS: Sign Hi Say Hi!

Web: www.signhisayhi.org.uk

email: signhisayhi@ndcsgroup.org.uk

Sign Hi Say Hi! is a group of local families with deaf/hearing impaired children & young people. They run a Club for deaf/hearing impaired children/young people, their families, siblings, parents, carers and friends. Sign Hi Say Hi! is affiliated to the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS). All deaf and young people are welcome from birth to young adults whether they choose to communicate by speech/ BSL/sign supported English etc.

Deaf children/young people meet, take part in activities such as sport, craft, workshops and simply be together. Parents /carers can have a coffee and socialise with other families or can book their child in beforehand and collect their child later. If you have a younger child or baby you are welcome just to drop in for a chat for 20 minutes or so. Many children or young people find they are the only deaf child or young person in their school and at Sign Hi Say Hi! they are with other young deaf people. We also occasionally run life-skills workshops for deaf young people. We also offer new parents whose children have just been identified as deaf informal parent to parent support.

The Club meets term time – most events are held Tuesday evenings 6.00pm to 8.00pm and occasionally events are held at the weekend – we try and vary where we meet up and have a range of activities to appeal to different ages. Siblings of the hearing-impaired child are also welcome to take part. The majority of events cost £1.00 per child. If you do not want to come to the Club but would like a committee member to call you please ring 07437 335655 or email signhisayhi@ndcsgroup.org.uk (Registered charity number 1037445).

CENTRAL LANCASHIRE DEAF CHILDRENS SOCIETY

Email: central.lancs.dcs@outlook.com

Phone: 07396 309162

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/405627293299271/>

This is a relatively new group that has been put together after several parents who had been meeting regularly in the Preston, Chorley and South Ribble areas saw a need for a local society to be formed. The group are looking to engage with more families and become established as a thriving local deaf children's society. Families with children of all ages and levels of deafness are welcome. They have a private closed Facebook group that can be found on the address above or can also be contacted via email. This group would love to hear from any parents who would like to know more or get involved.

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY (LaMDCS)

Registered charity No 1147415

Email: lancasterandmorecambe.dcs@gmail.com

The group aims to provide information and support for parents and peer group activities for hearing impaired children. There is no formal base for our charity but instead many activities are planned regularly through the year in both the Lancaster and Morecambe areas. We are starting to do more age specific activities for the children, including a pre-school group, art and crafts and sports activities for 4-7 years and then more adventurous activities for the older ones, as well as our regular family activities. Information is circulated by email and newsletter to inform parents and children of the various activities occurring.

The Lancashire Early Years Sensory Support service

Run the Rainbows play group for children with a hearing loss on Wednesdays at 9:45-11 am during term times at Riverbank Children's Centre, Preston.

enquiries@rainbowcentre.org

01329 289 500

Preschool children are also welcome to attend the local NDCS groups listed above, although activities may be predominately aimed at school age children.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Paediatric Audiology Service
Fulwood Audiology Clinic
4 Lytham Road
Fulwood
PRESTON
PR2 8JB

Tel: 01772 401310/ 401312

Email: paediatric.audiology@lthtr.nhs.uk

Emergency Texting Services

66247 (used in Lancashire only) – www.lancashire.police.uk or
www.lancsfireescue.org.uk

999 used in UK (mobile must be registered) – www.emergencysms.net

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપા કરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણ માં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو ییچھپیا یں یبھابی دست ہو یسکت ہے برا ئے مہر یبان پو ے یچھدی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعه بأ ح ر ف كيبيرة و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه لمعلومات يرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

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