

CHILDREN'S HEARING AID INFORMATION BOOKLET

Alder Hey Children's Hospital
Liverpool



At Alder Hey we fit hearing aids to children and young adults from birth to the age of 18 or 19 for young adults with additional needs. For children and young adults with a permanent hearing loss and no history of ear infections, the most suitable hearing aids are hearing aids that fit behind the ear. This leaflet explains more about these:

How will a hearing aid help?

A hearing aid will provide amplification for the pitches of sound where a hearing loss has been found in testing. This will help maximise a child's access to speech.



Hearing aids are set using real ear measurements, which takes into account the size and shape of your child's ear and the hearing test results. This means that the hearing aid is a prescription fitting and personalised for your child's level of hearing difficulty.

We fit a range of behind the ear hearing aids which come in a range of colours and powers dependent on the severity of hearing loss.



Ear moulds

The hearing aids are held in the ear by a custom ear mould.

An impression of the ear(s) is taken by the audiologist to make into ear moulds.

- A small sponge stopper is inserted a short distance into the ear canal and then a soft putty material is gently positioned into the ear, which hardens in a couple of minutes.
- This is then removed and sent to a manufacturer to make into an ear mould.
- Just like with the hearing aid device, these moulds can be made custom with a selection of colours, glitters and pictures.



Hearing aid follow up appointments

Once fitted with hearing aids, you will be required to attend regular follow up appointments in order to monitor your child's hearing loss, maintain your child's hearing aids and keep you up to date with the most relevant advice regarding the use of hearing aids. The follow ups will occur every 6 months or 12 months depending on your child's needs.

What happens at the follow up?

- a catch up with you to understand how the hearing aids are benefitting or where they could be improved
- an up-to-date hearing assessment
- maintenance of your device
- age- appropriate speech testing
- questionnaires to help evaluate the benefit of the hearing aid
- updating your hearing aids to the latest devices available to us when necessary.



Sensory Support Team

We will share the outcome of your appointments with the Sensory Support Service. We will need permission for a referral to this service. The Sensory support services are education services which support hearing impaired children and young people and their families at home and in an education setting. The service can monitor your child in nursery and school to ensure your child has the best environment for learning and to advise the teachers on how best to support for your child's hearing loss. This service can also supply additional support in the way of technology if they feel this would be to the benefit of your child.

Liverpool: 0151 233 5970

SensoryService@liverpool.gov.uk

Sefton: 01704 882038

hearingneeds@sefton.gov.uk

West Lancashire: helen.hodkinson@lancashire.gov.uk

patricia.pinder@lancashire.gov.uk

Information about your hearing aid

Switching on and off

To switch the aid ON: press in the battery compartment

To switch the aid OFF: open the battery compartment



Alternatively, if you have a rechargeable hearing aid, hold down the program button to turn on or off (flashes red for off and green for on).



Programs

The hearing aids are set with a basic program that is suitable for all everyday listening situations. However, sometimes we will add additional programs, for example, for use with a loop system, or music programme if your child is old enough to use the programme button.

Some children use an FM system with their aids in school – if so we will set the aids for this and explain how it works.

Volume control

This is usually inactivated for young children to prevent them from altering the hearing aid settings – we will advise you if we have activated it for a specific reason.

In either case the hearing aid will automatically adjust itself depending on the level of sound around your child, for example, the aid will reduce the level of loud sounds so that it is always at a comfortable level.

Right Vs Left

As each aid is set specifically for either the right or left ear you should be sure not to mix them up, so we have marked the:

RIGHT aid with a **RED MARKER**

LEFT aid with a **BLUE MARKER**

The marker can be found usually on the bottom or the back of the hearing aid.

Daily Checks

You will be issued with a hearing aid care pack which contains accessories to take care of your hearing aid.

- Check the aids are working every morning by switching each hearing aid on and cupping your hand around it – if it is working you will hear a whistling sound.
- Have a look at the hearing aids and ear moulds, and check that there is nothing blocking the tubing, for example, ear wax. Small amounts of wax can be picked out, but if there is a lot you may need to replace the tubing.
- It is also useful to regularly have a listen to the aids using the listening clip that is given to parents at the fitting appointment. You will get used to how the aids should sound and so be able to detect if there are any problems.



Common Problems

FAULT	POSSIBLE CAUSE/SOLUTION			
No sound	Dead battery or battery inserted incorrectly Check or change battery	Tubing blocked Clear blockage or change tubing	Condensation in tubing Use puffer to blow out condensation	Aid still not working Contact department
Aid whistling when in ear	Ear mould not inserted correctly Check fitting and reinsert correctly	Earmould poor fit Contact department for appointment	Build up of ear wax in ear canal Contact department for advice/appointment	
Problem with sound	Condensation in tubing Use puffer to blow out condensation	Aid become damp Place in drying pot with capsule overnight	Aid faulty Contact department for appointment	

Hearing Aid and Earmould Care

- Avoid getting the hearing aids wet.
- Keep the earmoulds clean by wiping them with a damp cloth.
- If necessary you can take the hearing aid off the ear mould so the ear mould can be washed separately. Ask your audiologist to show you how to do this.
- Every 6 months the ear mould tubing should be changed. This should be done in your hearing aid review. However, if you want to retube the mould yourself then please get in contact with the department for tubing and advice on how to do this.



SAFETY ALERT-tubing with lock

We often use tubing with a lock on which helps to hold the tubing securely in place in the ear mould. However, please let us know if the lock on the tube becomes loose or if the ear mould starts to split around where the tube lock is positioned as there is a risk that the lock can move through the ear mould into the ear canal. Please contact us if you have any concerns about the tubing lock on your child's ear mould.

Batteries

IMPORTANT Battery Warning

Please note that batteries are toxic and MUST be kept out of reach from babies and children at all times.

! National safety advice states we MUST fit a battery lock if your child or other children at home are under 5 years of age or have additional needs.

! Please let your audiologist know so we can ensure battery locks are fitted.

! If the hearing aid wearer has younger siblings in the house, then battery locks will also be added to older children's hearing aids as well.

! We will advise you of the batteries that your child's hearing aid takes.

! We supply the batteries – you can either call in and collect them or you can request them over the telephone or via our departmental email and we will post them out.

! Each battery lasts around one week, so we suggest that you put a new battery in once a week, for example, every Sunday.

! When putting a new battery in make sure that you place it in the correct way up – if the compartment doesn't close easily, it is probably the wrong way!

! We may add a lock to the battery compartment to stop young children accessing the battery. If so, we will show you how to use the battery lock.

Battery and device safety

REMEMBER! Batteries are toxic and should always be kept out of reach from children.

Batteries can cause serious harm if swallowed or placed into the body (such as the nostrils or ears)

If you suspect your child has swallowed or placed a battery in their body, please seek immediate medical attention!

Your device has a childproof battery lock. This can be opened using the tool provided during the initial fitting.

The device itself can be a choking hazard. Please do not leave children unattended with the device.



Contact us

If there are any problems or concerns with your child's hearing, hearing aids or ear moulds you can contact us for advice or to arrange an appointment through one of the following routes:

Telephone: 0151 252 5933 or 0151 252 5943

Email: AudiologyMail@alderhey.nhs.uk

Website: www.alderhey.nhs.uk

Useful websites: www.oticon.co.uk

www.phonak.com

www.ndcs.org.uk

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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