

Your Child's Hearing Aid

Introduction

Your child's hearing aid has been programmed to suit their individual hearing loss, needs, ear shape and ear size. We hope they are happy with their hearing aid and are finding it helpful.

This booklet aims to provide useful information on hearing aid use, maintenance and troubleshooting.

Getting used to hearing aids

It is common for hearing aids to at first sound loud or unusual. Your child might be hearing sounds that they have not heard before. They may find that their own voice seems different. This is completely normal and will usually settle as your child's brain adjusts to a new way of hearing.

Your child will get the most benefit from wearing their hearing aid all day however, at first, they may wish to build up their usage gradually. They may also wish to wear it in quieter listening environments first before wearing it in noise.

Whilst your child's hearing aid will withstand rain or splashes of water, it should not be worn in the shower or when swimming. It can be used in the bath providing the head remains dry. Furthermore, we do not advise wearing a hearing aid whilst your child is sleeping as it may not be comfortable for them. Removing the hearing aid when sleeping will also help to keep their ear ventilated and reduce the risk of infection.

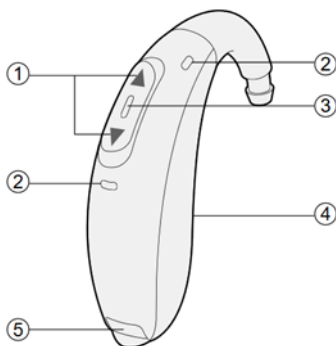
Communication skills

Hearing aids do not restore perfect hearing, but they will improve your child's ability to access speech and hear everyday sounds around them. Most people, even those with good hearing, find it harder to hear in noisy environments. It is therefore always helpful to use good communication skills such as:

- Getting your child's attention before speaking to them.
- Facing your child when you are speaking so they can benefit from your facial movements and expressions.
- Keep background noise to a minimum or move to a quieter space if possible.
- Talk to your child at a closer distance.
- Use gestures and hand movements to help communicate what you mean.
- If your child has not understood something, try re-phrasing rather than repeating exactly what you said before.

Basics of using the hearing aid

- The hearing aid is switched on when the battery compartment is closed.
- Open the battery compartment to turn the hearing aid off.
- If you have a child who is under 5 years of age, the hearing aid should have a lockable battery compartment that requires a special tool to open it. This is used in a lever-like manner, a bit like a bottle opener.
- If your child has two hearing aids, the right aid will have a red marker and the left a blue marker. It is important that the aids do not get mixed up as they will be programmed to each ear individually.
- Adjustable volume controls and listening programmes are disabled for most children so that they cannot accidentally change the settings.
- If your child has an adjustable volume control or additional listening programmes, these can be adjusted via the control buttons on the back of the hearing aid or via the free My Phonak Junior app.
- The hearing aid will reset to default settings when the aid is turned off and then back on again.



- ① Multi-function button
- ② Microphone input with wind and weather protector
- ③ Battery indicator light
- ④ Right or left indicator (right=red, left=blue), placed in the name plate
- ⑤ Battery compartment with on/off switch

* Two long beeps indicate that the battery must be changed soon.

Inserting hearing aids

It is important that hearing aids are inserted correctly to prevent discomfort or whistling. Your child's hearing aid may feel awkward to insert at first. It usually requires a bit of practice to get this right so do not be discouraged if you do not manage it straight away.

For younger children, it can help to try to keep their hands busy while you are inserting the aid. We also recommend providing them with some distracting entertainment or play whilst they get used to the sensation of the hearing aid in their ear and the sound it provides.

Your Audiologist will show you how to insert the hearing aid but there are also plenty of instructional videos online that you can refer to. Please contact us if you are having any trouble so that we can provide you with further advice.

Care & maintenance

A baby wipe or clean damp cloth is all that is usually required to clean your child's earmould or slim tube. This should be done daily. Harsh chemicals should be avoided as these may irritate the sensitive skin in the ear. A small cleaning brush or pin can be used to remove any wax at the tip of the earmould. To remove wax from a slim tube fitting, simply unscrew the tube from the hearing aid and thread a cleaning wire from the top of the tube down through the dome at the bottom. If you need to remove the dome, please ensure it is returned securely.

Should you wish to wash the earmould, please separate it from where the tubing and hearing aid connect, ensuring you do not remove the tubing from the earmould. Use warm soapy water to clean the earmould and rinse through with clean water, using the air puffer supplied to remove any remaining water from the tube. Leave the earmould in the drying pot with a drying capsule overnight. Once the earmould is completely dry it can be reattached to the hearing aid ready for use.

If your child has two hearing aids, clean them one at a time to avoid getting them mixed up.

It is important to have the tubing in your child's earmould replaced every 4-6 months as it hardens over time and affects the sound and fit of the hearing aid. You are welcome to book an appointment to have this done however, if you are happy to do this at home, please ask for some spare tubing. Your child's Audiologist will show you how to do this, but there are plenty of instructional videos online that you can follow.

Troubleshooting

You will have been provided with a device called a stetoclip which enables you to listen to your child's hearing aid to ensure it is working correctly. It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with how the hearing aid sounds and to complete daily listening checks to identify any crackling, distortion or low output. We recommend using the 6 Ling Sounds (shown on page 5) within your daily checks. If the hearing aid does not sound as it should and you have tried the steps below, then please contact us immediately.

No sound from the hearing aid

- Check the battery is inserted correctly with the flat/positive side facing towards you. If this does not resolve the issue, try a new battery. On occasions packets of batteries are defective, therefore if a new battery does not work, try a new one from a different packet.
- Check the tubing for ear wax and clear any wax found.
- Check the tubing for moisture. If present, detach the tubing from the hearing aid and use the air puffer to blow the moisture out from the tube. Do not blow into the tubing yourself as your breath contains moisture which may contribute to the blockage further. Place the hearing aid in the drying pot with a drying tablet overnight to allow any moisture to evaporate. If this is a recurrent problem, we can provide you with low condensation tubing.
- If the above checks are unsuccessful, ensuring the hearing aid is switched on, remove the hook or slim tube from the hearing aid by unscrewing it. If the aid now whistles, this suggests that there is an issue with the hook or a kink in the slim tube, both of which can be quickly replaced by us if you do not have spares yourself.
- If none of the above checks have been successful, please contact us immediately so that we can arrange to look at the aid or arrange a replacement.

The hearing aid is whistling

It is normal for a hearing aid to whistle or “feedback” if it is not in the ear correctly, or if something is covering the microphone e.g. a hat. High powered aids are more sensitive to this.

- Check that the earmould or slim tube is fully inserted into your child’s ear and is not damaged or loose. If it is, please contact us so we can provide replacements.
- The hearing aid might be whistling if your child has excessive ear wax. We can check this for you and advise on how to clear it if necessary.

The hearing aid is not connecting to Bluetooth devices

- The hearing aid is in pairing mode for the first 3 minutes of being switched on. If you cannot see the hearing aid on your device, try turning the hearing aid off and on again. If your child has two hearing aids, ensure that you do this with both hearing aids and that both aids are near the device that you are trying to connect to.
- Turn the Bluetooth function of your device off and on again to put it into pairing mode.
- Should you still not be able to pair the devices, check that the aid or device is not already paired with another device i.e. another phone or tablet.
- If the above checks are unsuccessful, please contact us so that we can check the hearing aid and its Bluetooth settings.

Keeping the aid on your child

Most young children will go through a phase of exploring and removing their hearing aids. This can happen at any time, regardless of how well they’ve been using it up to that point. To help with this, try the following:

- Keep your child’s hands busy while you are inserting the hearing aid.
- Provide your child with some distracting entertainment or play whilst they are initially getting used to the feel and sound of the hearing aid.
- Try using toupee tape to secure the hearing aid to the skin behind the ear. We can supply you with this.
- Hearing aid retainers, clips and headbands are handy devices to help secure the aid in place and reduce the chance of it being lost. Your child will have been supplied with a clip, but other designs/devices are available online.

Hearing aid safety

Hearing aids are programmed for each individual and must only be used by the intended user. Hearing can be damaged if hearing aids are worn by another person.

Hearing aids contain small parts that can cause choking if swallowed. When the aids are not in use, please store them in a closed case out of the reach of children, individuals with cognitive impairment, and pets.

Hearing aids must never be immersed in water as this may cause damage. Hearing aids must not be used when swimming or showering. They can be worn in the bath providing your child’s head remains dry.

Hearing aids must never be exposed to excessive heat. Microwaves or other heating devices should not be used to dry a hearing aid.

Hearing aid batteries are toxic if swallowed. Ensure batteries are kept out of the reach of children, individuals with cognitive impairment, and pets. Hearing aids can be fitted with a lockable battery drawer to reduce this risk. Children under 5 years of age or those with siblings under 5 years will be routinely provided with this feature.



In the event of battery ingestion, go straight to Accident & Emergency (A&E) or call 999 for an emergency ambulance. For pets, contact an emergency veterinarian.

Hearing aids should be removed prior to undergoing medical or dental X-ray, CT, or MRI scans but can be worn through airport scanners. If your child has a pacemaker, defibrillator or programmable ventriculoperitoneal shunt, keep the hearing aid at least 15 cm (6 inches) away from the active implant site. Should they experience any interference, do not use the hearing aid and contact the implant manufacturer.

Lost or damaged hearing aids

Your child's hearing aid and sundries are issued free of charge. There is also no charge for lost or damaged hearing aids, though we ask that all users and parents/carers take good care of the devices at all times. If your child's hearing aid becomes lost, damaged or faulty, please notify us immediately so that we can arrange a replacement or repair. Hearing aids remain the property of the NHS and therefore any devices should be returned to us when no longer needed.

East Sussex Service for Children with Sensory Needs (SCSN)

SCSN provides support and guidance to hearing impaired children, their families, nursery/state school and other supporting professionals. Unless you have requested us not to do so, we shall refer your child to the SCSN team. Your child will be assigned a Teacher of the Deaf who should contact you to explain their role and arrange to see your child. SCSN can be contacted via email at scsn@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Ling Sounds

The Ling 6 sounds represent speech sounds varying from low to high frequency. They help to test that your child has access to the key sounds required to hear, understand and learn speech. The test checks that your child can firstly detect the sounds but in time also discriminate them. We recommend that you use this test with your child regularly and for daily hearing aid listening checks.

Ling Sound	6	Speech frequency it measures	Example of word containing this sound
m		Very low frequency	<u>M</u> um
oo		Low frequency	B <u>oo</u>
ah		Centre of the speech range	C <u>a</u> r
ee		Low and high frequency	B <u>ee</u>
sh		Moderately high frequency	F <u>sh</u>
s		Very high frequency	<u>S</u> plash

How to give the test

- Ensure the environment you are in is quiet and free of distractions, i.e. TV turned off and toys out of sight.
- When you present the sound, use a normal speaking voice and sit either beside or behind your child to ensure they are not looking at your face. Cover your mouth so that your child cannot feel your breath. Present each sound individually and in a random order.
- When your child responds, reinforce the sound that they have heard vocally or visually e.g. for the sound 'ah', say 'great listening you heard me say 'ah'' or show them a toy that contains the sound, for example a car.
- Initially present each sound at around 20 centimetres from your child's ear.
- Once your child responds at 20 centimetres, increase the distance to around 1 metre. If your child responds, increase to 2 and then 3 metres.
- If your child does not respond to a sound, try saying the sound again but this time include some pitch change and lengthen the sound a little. If your child does not respond to the sound the second time, it's a good idea to leave it aside and move onto another. Be sure to discuss this with your child's Audiologist or Teacher of the Deaf.

Paediatric Audiology contact information

Telephone (08:30 – 16:00hrs): 0300 1315 679

Text only: 07773 199 230

Email: esht.audiology@nhs.net

Website: www.esht.nhs.uk/service/audiology

Sources of information

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk>

<https://www.connevans.co.uk>

<https://c2hearonline.com>

<https://www.phonak.com/en-uk>

<https://www.hearoes.co.uk>

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the patient experience team on 0300 131 4784 or esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Hand hygiene

We are committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of our leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department on 0300 131 4434 or esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Alison Hagan, Senior Paediatric Audiologist

Lisa Ireland, Paediatric Audiology Nurse

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Diagnostic, Anaesthetic and Surgery - Paediatric Audiology

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