

What is unilateral hearing loss?

This is when the hearing in one ear is normal but the hearing in the other is not.

How will this affect my child?

The good news is that most children with this sort of hearing loss manage very well. Speech and language usually develop in the normal way.

Who can help?

The **Sheffield Service for Hearing Impaired Children (SHIC)** can provide help and support for children of all ages who have a hearing loss. If your child is not yet in school a specialist teacher can visit you and your child at home to give advice. They can also arrange to see children in nursery school if this is helpful. They can provide written or spoken reports.

Any child who is in school can be visited by a specialist teacher. They can observe your child in the classroom and speak to their class or subject teacher to find out whether the hearing loss is affecting school work in any way.

Where a child does seem to be having a problem they can suggest ways to help. After a school visit they can write a report for the consultant in audiology.

What difficulties might my child have?

The child with unilateral hearing loss normally copes very well and naturally learns to make the best use of their good ear.

However it is possible that they could have difficulty with the following:

- Hearing faint or distant speech
- Knowing where sounds are coming from (they will always appear to come from the better hearing side)
- Hearing speech when the poor ear is towards the speaker
- Hearing speech when the surroundings are noisy.

How can they make the best use of their hearing?

A teacher from the **SHIC** Service will be able to help and support your child in school.

They might suggest that he or she:

- Sits in class so that the better ear is toward the teacher
- Moves for group work when possible
- Sits with a clear view of the teachers face
- When possible sits with the poor ear towards a wall and the good ear towards the class

The support staff from SHIC will also advise class teachers on ways of helping your child in school.

Why do we have to keep coming back to the hospital for more hearing tests?

It is important that your child's hearing is checked on a regular basis so that we can be sure that the better ear remains good.

Glue ear is a common childhood condition that could cause the hearing in the good ear to be temporarily poor. Your child will be referred to a specialist if this, or any other condition, is causing a loss of hearing in the better ear.

If you or your child notices a change in hearing levels between visits please phone us to arrange an appointment.

Can my child have a hearing aid to improve their hearing?

It is possible that a hearing aid might be helpful.

The type of aid that would be suitable will depend on the level of hearing in the poorer ear. Please speak to the audiologist or doctor next time you are in the department and the options will be explained. Hearing aids can usually be offered on a trial basis.

How can my child protect the good hearing that they have?

Listening to loud sounds over a period of time can damage hearing. It is particularly important for your child to know this and not risk damage to the hearing in the better ear.

Encourage careful use of personal stereos – a useful rule of thumb being that if other people can hear your music it is dangerously loud for you.

Always follow health and safety guidelines when involved in noisy occupations or leisure pursuits. Use ear protectors as advised!

Avoid exposing your child to cigarette smoke as this has a recognised link to glue ear.

Information Leaflet number:

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What should I do if I have any further questions?
Please telephone 0114 271 7450

Name: _____

Date: _____

And ask to speak to: _____

www.ndcs.org.uk

<http://www.don'tlosethemusic.com/home>

UNILATERAL HEARING LOSS



For further advice contact:

Main hospital number: 0114 271 7000

Patient Advice & Liaison Team (PALS)

The Children's Hospital

Western Bank

Sheffield

S10 2TH

PALS office: 0114 271 7594

www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk

Our young patients are at the centre of everything we do and all our work is focused on providing them with the best facilities, equipment and experience possible, helping to provide a world-class facility that is positioned at the very forefront of paediatric care.



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