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Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board

Patient Information Leaflet

Hearing Aid for Conductive Hearing Loss (Glue Ear)

Children's Audiology

Noah's Ark Children's Hospital for Wales, Heath Park, Cardiff, CF14 4XW

Tel: 029 218 43 179 Text: 0780 567 0359

Email: paedsaudiology.cav@wales.nhs.uk

Introduction

About this leaflet

Your child has been found to have Glue Ear and you would like your child to be considered for Hearing Aid to help with his/her hearing loss. This leaflet gives you some information about the condition and the next steps in getting a hearing aid.

What is glue ear?

Glue ear is a very common condition, affecting mainly children, where thick sticky mucus builds up behind the eardrum. In some children it causes hearing problems. They may also develop, as a result, problems with speech, behaviour and education.

In a lot of cases glue ear will clear up by itself, and will not require any treatment. However, if it has persisted for more than 3 months, then most doctors would feel that it requires treatment of some sort.



What causes glue ear?

The reason children tend to get glue ear is because the tube that normally drains the mucus away (the Eustachian tube) does not work very well. We do not know, however, why this is so, or why children in particular are so prone to the problem.

Non-Surgical help

Temporary hearing aids

A hearing aid can help a child overcome the hearing loss associated with glue ear. Some children benefit more than others, but in many cases children can be helped to avoid an operation by the temporary use of a hearing aid. It will give the condition chance to resolve on its own, without having grommets.

Hearing aids are worn behind the ear and are held in place with a custom made ear mould. Hearing aids work by amplifying (make louder) sounds and deliver them into the ear.

After the decision has been made to trial a hearing aid, the Audiologist will take an impression(s) for an earmould(s).

An appointment is then arranged within six weeks for further hearing testing and hearing aid fitting, if needed.

For younger children hearing aid usage requires a lot of effort on the part of the parents, and may be challenging for the parents and child to keep it in.

Hearing Aid 'Fitting' Appointment

Hearing levels often change with glue ear, and therefore, your child will have a repeat hearing test, immediately before the planned hearing aid fitting to see if hearing has changed.

If their hearing has improved significantly then a hearing aid may not be needed, and a follow-up appointment will be arranged.



However if hearing levels are still raised, and there are reported hearing difficulties, then hearing aid(s) can be offered.

Hearing Test:

Information needs to be obtained for a number of pitches (frequencies) of sound, for each ear, in order for a hearing aid to be programmed for your child. If it is not possible to test your child fully, then a further appointment may have to be arranged, or discuss an alternative way of getting results.

Has the Hearing Aid Helped?

We will ask you to think about situations where your child finds hearing particularly difficult and where you would like to see it improve, for example needing the TV turned up loud or not hearing well in class.

These situations become the 'goals' of the hearing aid fitting, and a few weeks after the hearing aid fitting, we will ask you to think about those situations again, and tell us how much things have improved (or not).

Using the Hearing Aid

We will tell you how to use the hearing aid(s), and how to put the earmould in correctly. We will also tell you how to get batteries, keep the earmould clean and what to do if the hearing aid is not working. We will contact you a few weeks after fitting to find out how things are going, and whether you need more help or information.

Support

We work with Specialist Teachers who are able to provide support about hearing aids to Schools. If you are happy that we let these

specialists know that your child has been given a hearing aid, then they will contact your child's School/Nursery to give them more help and information.

You can also get more support and information from the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS).

Follow up

We will arrange to see you and your child again for hearing testing and reprogramming of the hearing aid (if it is needed) every 3-4 months, but if you have worries about the hearing before your next appointment, then you can contact us directly to speak to an Audiologist, or to get an appointment.

Contact:

For patients registered with Patient Knows Best (PKB) please access your account.

For patients not registered with Patient Knows Best (PKB):

Tel: 02920 743179

Mobile Tel: 07805 670259

Email: Audiology.helpline@wales.nhs.uk

Hearing Aid Pathway Summary for Parents:

	Registered with Patient Knows Best	Not Registered with Patient Knows Best
2nd appointment with Glue Ear Present, Parents would like to consider Hearing Aid(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Give email address to Audiologist for PKB2. Accept PKB invitation3. Information leaflet from Audiologist and further information available in PKB Library <p>Impression taken by Audiologist</p>	<p>Information leaflet available from Audiologist</p> <p>Impression taken by Audiologist</p>

COSIC Questionnaire	Questionnaire sent by PKB before 'fitting' appointment to ask what problems your child has with hearing	Questionnaire sent by post before 'fitting' appointment to ask what problems your child has with hearing
'Fitting' appointment arranged within 6 weeks	Hearing Test in Clinic to obtain information about each ear, and a range of frequencies of sound. Hearing aid may NOT be fitted if hearing has improved OR if enough information is not able to be collected about your child's hearing	Hearing Test in Clinic to obtain information about each ear, and a range of frequencies of sound. Hearing aid may NOT be fitted if hearing has improved OR if enough information is not able to be collected about your child's hearing
After Fitting Questionnaire	Questionnaire sent by PKB 2 weeks after hearing aid fitted, to find out how your child is getting on, and how much the hearing aid has helped to improve hearing.	Questionnaire sent by post 2 weeks after hearing aid fitted, to find out how your child is getting on, and how much the hearing aid has helped to improve hearing.
Ongoing Appointments/ Help	Regular follow-ups in Clinic. Information available in PKB Library but can contact Audiology via PKB if questions/concerns.	Regular follow-ups in Clinic. Contact Audiology via phone or email if questions/concerns.



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