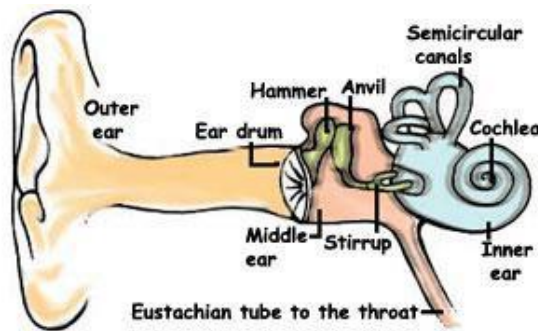




Unilateral Hearing Loss

What is Unilateral Hearing Loss?

The simple answer: unilateral hearing loss (UHL) is when there is a hearing loss in one ear and normal hearing in the other ear. It may be congenital (from birth) or from something that happened after birth (medication, trauma, genetic). The hearing loss can range from mild to profound. It could be conductive (outer and middle ear) or sensorineural (inner ear) or a mixture of both. It may be temporary or permanent. Unilateral hearing loss can be challenging as it is often overlooked because the child has one good ear. You are your child's best advocate! Learn what your child can hear and how it will affect speech, language and learning, then seek out the appropriate services.



and understanding speech sounds and provide more balanced hearing, helping them determine where sounds are coming from.

- FM Systems allow the speaker's voice (parent, therapist or teacher) to be heard above any existing background noise. FM systems can be used by children of all ages in many different environments and can be used with a hearing aid or alone.

Common Effects of Unilateral Hearing Loss:

- Your child may have difficulty finding where sound is coming from, this is called localization. This is important Ear Canal when listening in groups of people as it helps us to find who is talking. If it takes longer to identify who is speaking, they may miss part of the conversation.
- Understanding speech in a noisy background can be challenging, especially if the good ear is closest to the noise
- Your child may have difficulty hearing you from another room or from outside. When two normal hearing ears work together, sound seems louder. When a child has UHL, they can often hear the sounds of speech from a distance, but may not always understand what is being said.

Treatment Options:

- Rehabilitation Training / Speech Therapy: Learn how to use the good ear, practice how to localize sounds and working on clear speech sounds can be provided by a skilled therapist who has experience working with kids with a UHL.
- Hearing Aids can be used if the child has some residual hearing that can be amplified. This may help with hearing

How to Help Your Child Hear Better at Home:

- Make eye contact when speaking to your child.
- Get your child's attention before speaking so they won't miss anything.
- Try to make sure your child sits in a position with the good ear facing those who are talking (in the car, at the dinner table)
- Create a quiet listening environment while playing or doing homework by turning off the T.V. or radio.
- Talk to your child during daily routines ("I'm making a sandwich right now").
- Use repetition and expand your child's vocabulary

with new words (“terrific” instead of “good”).

- If your child wears a hearing aid, make sure it is working properly and they wear them daily.

Protect the “Good Ear”:

- Continue to have regular hearing tests.
- Use earplugs to protect against loud noises.
- Take your child to the doctor right away if he/she get an ear infection, to prevent further damage to the ear.

References

- [Unilateral Hearing Loss](#) - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- [What is unilateral hearing loss?](#) – Boys Town National Research Hospital
- [Hearing and Balance](#) – Boys Town National Research Hospital
- [Unilateral deafness](#) – National Deaf Childrens Society

Resources

- [Hands and Voices](#)
- Boys Town National Hospital - www.boystownhospital.org/ and www.babyhearing.org/
- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#)

Comprehensive Service Center for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf-Blind, Ohana Program 1953 S. Beretania Street, Ste 5A, Honolulu, HI 96826, (808) 369-0499 phone, (808) 447-2044 videophone, csc@csc-hawaii.org, www.csc-hawaii.org