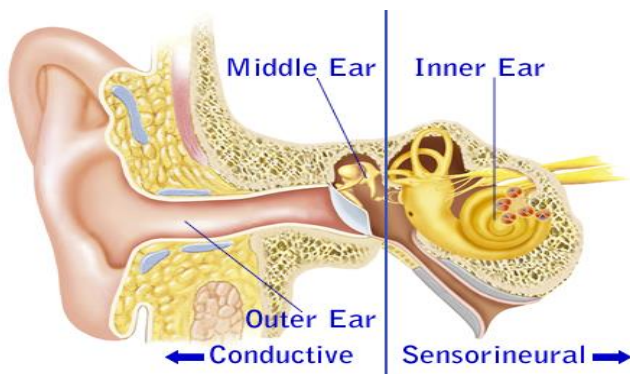


### What is Conductive hearing loss?

Conductive hearing loss is the term used for hearing problems arising in the ear canal and/or middle part of the ear. With conductive hearing loss sound is prevented from reaching the inner part of the ear or cochlea. Conductive hearing loss is often temporary and may fluctuate.



The most common causes of conductive hearing loss are:

- Infections in the ear canal or middle ear
- Perforation of the ear drum
- Fluid in the middle ear (glue ear)
- Fusing of the middle ear bones
- Wax build up

### Presentation and difficulties associated with Conductive Hearing Loss

- Hearing can fluctuate with conductive hearing loss. Some days the student can hear better than on others. This can be difficult to monitor in students and cause confusion for the student
- If a student is not hearing well they will have difficulty hearing and developing their own speech and language. They may not hear themselves well and may talk loudly
- If a student is not hearing well this will have a significant impact on their learning. The classroom is particularly challenging for

- student's with hearing loss as background noise makes listening very difficult
- The student's behaviour in class may be affected. They may not be attentive in class. If they are not sure they have heard correctly they may watch what others are doing. They may become frustrated. It is important to consider the impact the hearing loss may be having on the student's behaviour

### Management

Discharging ears need to be treated. If a student's ears are sore or discharging encourage their family to take them to the doctor.

Encourage the student to blow their nose.

If the conductive hearing loss is persistent and impacting on education, speech and communication it can often be managed by medical professionals (Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) specialists and Audiologists) An ENT specialist will consider surgical interventions e.g. grommets, adenoidectomy, tonsillectomy, perforation repairs, wax removal.

An Audiologist may manage long term conductive hearing losses with hearing aids.

### How to help in the classroom:

Use good communication strategies (see below):

- Seat the student at the front of the class, or close to where you spend most of your time. Allow the student to move seats to where they can best see and hear what is happening in the classroom
- Avoid moving about while speaking so the student can watch your face. Visual information from watching the face and lips aids speech understanding

[continued]

- Students may miss information when looking at maps/books and listening simultaneously.
- Reduce the background noise whenever possible. Open plan classrooms are particularly difficult environments for students with hearing loss due to the background noise
- If the classroom has a sound field system, use it routinely to help your students who have a hearing loss
- Classrooms with hard surfaces such as wooden floors make it harder to hear clearly. Sounds bounce off hard surfaces which results in a more distorted signal. Classrooms with carpets (which absorb sound) and absorbent ceiling tiles, especially acoustic tiles with holes or absorbent surfaces, are best
- Raising your voice does not help speech discrimination. Speak clearly (not too loud or too soft; not too fast or too slow)
- Make sure you have the student's attention before starting to speak to them
- Be willing to repeat or rephrase. Get the student's attention by touching them or saying their name before you give instructions
- Oral instructions may be misinterpreted. Written hand-outs or visuals help
- A buddy may assist the student
- Give clues – cue in the student so that he/she knows what you are talking about. When you change topic, make sure the student knows what you are now talking about
- Try and ensure only one person talks at a time
- Restate what other pupils are saying so the student with hearing loss does not miss out on hearing the comments, questions or answers of other students
- Use visuals to support your teaching. The student can clarify what you have said by looking at the visuals

## Contact us

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Monday to Friday

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