



Hearing Aids

Patient and Family Education

This teaching sheet contains general information. Please talk with your child's doctor or pediatric audiologist to get more specific information. Call **813-262-1330** to make an appointment with a pediatric audiologist.

What is a hearing aid?

A hearing aid makes sound louder where your child needs it so that he/she can hear speech better. Hearing aids cannot restore normal hearing, but they can make listening easier and improve your child's quality of life.

How does a digital hearing aid work?

A hearing aid is powered by a small battery.

- A microphone picks up sound from around your child.
- An amplifier makes the sound louder where your child needs it.
- A receiver puts the amplified sound into the ear.

- Digital hearing aids are programmable using a computer. This allows the audiologist to set the hearing aid exactly the way your child needs it for his/her hearing loss. These hearing aids can be reprogrammed if your child's hearing changes.
- Digital hearing aids are automatic. They adjust incoming sounds automatically depending on your child's hearing loss. They are programmed to prevent sounds from ever getting too loud so that they won't hurt your child's ears.

Should my child wear one hearing aid or two?

Most children with hearing loss need 2 hearing aids. Hearing with 2 ears helps your child:

- Tell where sound is coming from
- Understand what other people say when it gets noisy
- Have more natural sound than listening with 1 ear because it makes their hearing balanced

What can I expect from my child's hearing aids?

- Your child should have improved understanding of speech. The amount of time it takes to see improvement varies. It depends on your child's age and hearing loss.
- Your child will need some time to adjust to wearing hearing aids. The hearing aids feel and sound differently than what they are used to, so it will take time to get used to this.
- You should not expect your child to have feedback (whistling sounds) problems or discomfort. Sounds should also not be too loud for your child. The hearing aids have a setting that prevents sound from ever getting too loud. If you have any of these problems, call your child's audiologist.

How much should my child wear his hearing aids?

- Your child should wear his/her hearing aids during all waking hours except when bathing or swimming.
- When your child is sleeping at night or taking a nap, take the hearing aids out of his/her ears.
- At night, take your child's hearing aids out, open the battery door, and put the hearing aids in the dri-aid kit.
- Children learn all the time. They need their hearing aids to help them learn and hear all the sounds around them.

How do I get my child to wear his/her hearing aids?

A few ideas to help your child get used to wearing his/her hearing aids include:

- Do something special and fun with your child when he/she first gets new hearing aids. This will help him/her to have a good feeling about them. Help your child to view the hearing aids as exciting and fun, not something to feel bad about or something that should be hidden.
- If your child appears resistant to wearing hearing aids, some parents have their child start wearing them gradually. Your child can start by wearing them in quieter places. Increase the time he/she wears the hearing

aids each day. He/she should wear the hearing aids full-time or during all waking hours by the end of the first week of having them.

- Some parents prefer to have their child wear the hearing aids full-time right away. Begin on a day when you can be with him/her all the time. Each time your child takes off the hearing aids, simply put them back on. Your child will soon learn that when he/she is awake, the hearing aids are supposed to be worn.
- Do not give your child a choice about wearing them. After children have been wearing hearing aids for a while, they usually want to wear them because they realize that they help them hear well.

How do I take care of the hearing aids?

Your child's audiologist will talk with you more about specific care for child's hearing aids. Here are some general guidelines:

Each Morning:

- Check the batteries
- Do a listening check with the listener. Listen for static noise.

Each Night:

- Wipe off the hearing aids and earmolds with a cloth or tissue.
- Clean earwax from the earmold with a wax loop.
- Take the batteries out of the hearing aids. Put them away in a safe place.
- Put the hearing aids and earmolds in the Dri-Aid kit and close the top. Do not put the batteries in the Dri-Aid kit because it will drain the power from the batteries quickly.

Each Week:

- Remove the earmolds from the hearing aids and wash only the earmolds once a week in warm, sudsy water. Dry the earmold well with the bulb accessory.

What special care should I take with my child's hearing aids?

- Protect the hearing aids from moisture.
- If they get damp, put them in the Dri-Aid kit right away.
- Protect them from hair spray and hair dryers.
- Do not take them apart frequently.
- Use hearing aid cords attached to your child's collar so they won't get lost. Make the cord short so that it doesn't choke your child.
- Talk with your child's audiologist about hearing aid insurance.

How long will the batteries last?

- Size 13 batteries usually last about 2 weeks.
- Smaller batteries will last about 1 week.
- Hearing aids use zinc air batteries. You can get hearing aid batteries from any drug store like Walgreens, CVS Pharmacy, Walmart, and Target.
- Remove the sticker on the battery when you are ready to use it.
 - You cannot put the sticker back on the battery to make it last longer.
 - You can put the sticker on the calendar to remind yourself when you last changed the battery.

Hearing aid batteries are poisonous. Keep them in a safe place.

- If someone swallows a battery, call the battery hotline number on the back of the battery package or the Florida Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 right away.
- Keep these numbers handy so you can find it in case of an emergency.