



# Noise Induced Hearing Loss

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 schedule an appointment with a pediatric audiologist.

## How does listening to loud noises or music cause hearing loss?

Inside the inner ear, tiny hair cells move in response to sound and this information is sent to the hearing nerve.

- If your child hears too many loud sounds or listens to loud music for too long, the hair cells cannot work well and can become damaged.
- When this happens, your child cannot hear well and his/her ears may start to ring or buzz.
- After a day or so, the hair cells recover and your child's hearing usually returns to normal.

If your child is exposed to loud noises or music for too long, your child's ears may not recover.

- Your child's hearing may not return to normal and the hair cells may stay damaged.
- Everyone will lose hearing if they are exposed to enough loud noises.

## What kind of hearing loss does noise cause?

The more hair cells that are damaged, the worse your child's hearing will get. This type of hearing loss is permanent and can never get better.

- Hearing loss will occur first in the high pitches.
- It then gets worse and spreads to other pitches important for understanding what other people say.
- Your child may be able to hear people, but may have a hard time understanding them. People may sound like they are mumbling when they are actually talking clearly.

## When is noise loud enough to hurt my child's hearing?

- If your child has to yell to talk over the noise, it's loud enough to hurt his/her hearing.
- If someone else can hear the music from your child's personal earphones, it's loud enough to hurt your child's hearing.

## What are common noises that cause hearing loss?

Some examples of common noises that may cause hearing loss are:

- Loud music from a radio, earphones or earbuds, speakers at a concert, club, or in the car.
- Power tools, machinery, lawn mower
- Fireworks
- Gunshots. Even though it is a very short sound, it's loud enough to hurt your child's hearing.

## How can I protect my child's hearing from noise?

Have your child wear earplugs that fit in or over his/her ears.

- Have him/her wear hearing protection (like earplugs made to prevent damage to the ear from noise exposure) when he/she is around loud tools, machinery, lawn mowers, at firework shows, or at the shooting range.
- If you are going somewhere and the music will be too loud (like at a concert), have him/her wear earplugs that fit in the ears.

## What can I do about a hearing loss caused by noise?

- This is a permanent hearing loss that cannot be fixed.
- Hearing aids can help, but nothing will bring your child's hearing back to the way it was.
- The hearing loss may also get worse unless your child wears hearing protection.