



Unilateral 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.

What is unilateral hearing loss?

Unilateral hearing loss is when 1 ear has a hearing loss and 1 ear has normal hearing.

How does this type of hearing loss affect my child?

The ability to tell where sound is coming from (called localizing) requires 2 ears. Children with unilateral hearing loss often have difficulty figuring out where sounds came from. These children are:

- At risk for poorer language skills and may need speech therapy.
- More likely to repeat a grade in school.

Does my child need a hearing aid?

This depends on your child's level of hearing loss. A child with profound hearing loss in only 1 ear will probably not benefit from using a hearing aid in that ear.

How can I help my child?

Your child's audiologist (a person who does hearing tests and manages hearing loss) will talk with you about more specific care for your child. Some general guidelines to follow include:

- Gain your child's attention before you talk
- Reduce background noise when your child is listening
- Use ear plugs to protect your child's good hearing ear from loud noise
- Be sure your child receives a hearing test every year
- Teach your child to look for cars because they may not be able to tell which direction a car is coming from
- Be aware of signs of an ear infection. Call your child's doctor right away if you think your child may have an ear infection. Some common signs of an ear infection are:
 - Fever (temperature over 100.3 °F)
 - Ear pain or pulling at the ears
 - Trouble hearing
 - Being fussy or not being able to sleep
 - Pus draining from the ear

What will help my child in the classroom?

- Make sure that your child sits near the teacher with his normal hearing ear toward the teacher and away from other noise
- It is helpful if your child's classroom does not have a lot of background noise
- Your child should use clear, visual aids such as overhead projectors and handouts
- A personal FM system or a sound amplification system for the whole classroom may help your child.