



GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus  
Cymru  
Public Health  
Wales

Scan here



# Your baby has a hearing loss



[www.phw.nhs.wales/newborn-hearing-screening](http://www.phw.nhs.wales/newborn-hearing-screening)



Sgrinio Clyw Babanod **Cymru**  
Newborn Hearing Screening **Wales**

V9: August 24

## **This leaflet is for parents and families of babies who have a hearing loss. It will tell you about:**

- what a hearing loss is;
- different levels of hearing loss;
- causes of hearing loss;
- what support is available for you and your baby;
- hearing aids;
- communication;
- going to school; and
- further support and information.

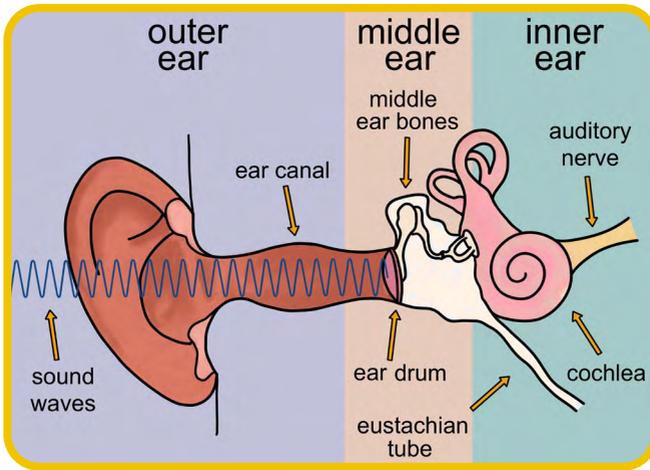


# What is a hearing loss?

A hearing loss is when your ability to hear is reduced.

It happens when one or more parts of the ear are not working effectively.

It is very unlikely that your baby will not be able to hear any sounds at all.



There are different levels of hearing. The terms ‘D/deaf’, ‘hearing impaired’ and ‘hard of hearing’ are also used where a hearing loss is found.

Deaf with a capital ‘D’ refers to people who identify with Deaf culture as part of the Deaf community and tend to communicate in British Sign Language. deaf with a small ‘d’ refers to hearing status generally. D/deaf is inclusive of both.

## Levels of hearing loss

### Mild

This is when a person may hear some speech sounds but quiet sounds are hard to hear.

### Moderate

This is when a person will not hear everything that is being said by another person talking at a normal level.

### Severe

This is when a person will not hear any speech when another person is talking at a normal level and only some loud sounds.

### Profound

This is when a person will not hear any speech and only very loud sounds.

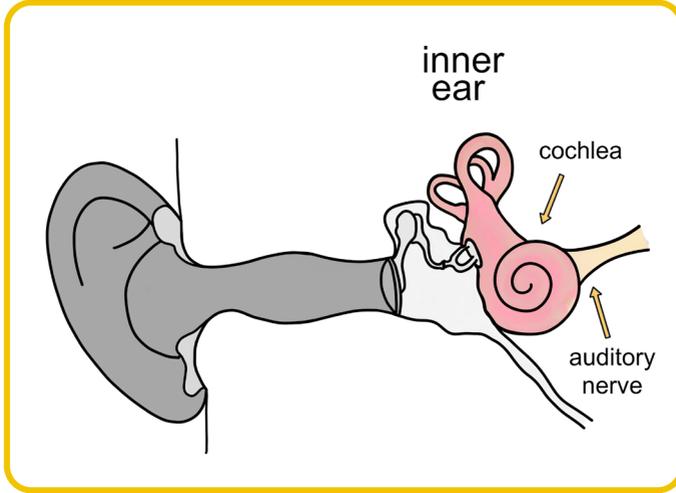
Your audiologist will be able to explain which sounds your baby can hear and which sounds they have difficulty hearing. It is unlikely that your baby will not be able to hear any sounds at all.

## Causes of hearing loss

There are different types of hearing loss. The type of hearing loss your baby has depends on where the problem is in the ear.

# Sensorineural hearing loss

This is when there is a problem in the inner ear (cochlea) or hearing nerve. This is a permanent hearing loss.



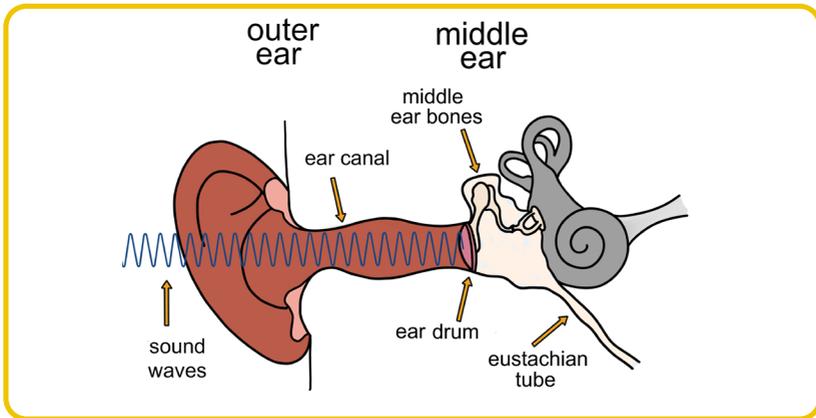
Most babies with this type of hearing loss are born into families where no one else is affected. In some families the hearing loss may be inherited (passed down from parents to their children).

Sensorineural hearing loss may also be caused by:

- infections during pregnancy;
- premature birth and complications at birth;
- another condition or be linked to other difficulties; or
- childhood illnesses such as mumps, measles or meningitis.

# Conductive hearing loss

This is when sound cannot easily travel through the ear. For most babies, this type of hearing loss does not last or might come and go over time. In some babies, the hearing loss will not get better.



This hearing loss is usually caused by fluid in the middle ear. This is known as glue ear. This is a very common and often treatable condition. Sometimes it may be caused by problems with the development of the outer and middle ear.

Children with sensorineural hearing loss can also have a temporary conductive hearing loss.

You can talk with the specialist doctor (a doctor who has more in depth knowledge of children's hearing). They will work with your audiologist to find the cause of your baby's hearing loss. For some babies and children, it may not be possible to find the cause of their hearing loss.

# Hearing aids

An audiologist may tell you that hearing aids will help your baby to hear better.

If you choose to have hearing aids for your baby, a special mould of your baby's ear will be made. You will be given another appointment to have the hearing aids fitted.

The audiologist will give you advice about the best way to use your baby's hearing aids.

They will not be painful or uncomfortable for your baby to wear. You will be offered regular checks of your baby's hearing and the hearing aids.



# Support for you and your baby

This can be a worrying time. You can talk to the Early Years Support Team, who will be able to answer any questions you have. This team includes:

- an audiologist;
- a specialist teacher (who is qualified to teach children with a hearing loss);
- a specialist doctor; and
- a speech and language therapist and maybe a social worker.

The team will meet with you regularly to discuss what support you and your baby may need.



## Going to school

Most children with a hearing loss go to mainstream schools. Some children may go to schools which have specialist support for children with a hearing loss. A specialist teacher will make sure that your child's needs are met.

# Communication

Children with a hearing loss and their families communicate in different ways. Some children will learn to use:

- speech;
- sign language; or
- a mixture of both.

A specialist teacher and other members of the Early Years Support Team will help you choose the best way for you and your baby to communicate.

It is very important to communicate with your baby as much as possible.

## Further support

There may be other support available to help you care for your baby. This includes financial support.

The Early Years Support Team, the National Deaf Children's Society, the Department for Work and Pensions or Citizens Advice will be able to give you more information.

# Further information

If you have any questions about newborn hearing screening or would like information in Easy Read, British Sign Language (BSL), audio or large print, contact your local screening office or visit our website:



**South East Wales: 029 2184 3568**



**South West Wales: 01792 343364**



**North Wales: 03000 848710**



**[newborn-hearing-screening@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:newborn-hearing-screening@wales.nhs.uk)**



**[www.phw.nhs.wales/newborn-hearing-screening](http://www.phw.nhs.wales/newborn-hearing-screening)**

You can contact us in Welsh or English. It will take us the same amount of time to answer you, whichever language you choose.

For more information on how we use information about you, visit our website at:

**[www.phw.nhs.wales/privacy-notice](http://www.phw.nhs.wales/privacy-notice)**

You can also contact the National Deaf Children's Society. The society has a helpline for parents and families whose children have a hearing loss. Their experienced advisors can help answer any questions you may have.

Freephone helpline: **0808 800 8880**

Website: **[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)**

**Crystal  
Mark  
23013**

Clarity approved by  
Plain English Campaign

