

Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

CARING FOR HEARING AIDS AND EARMOLDS

AT CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PITTSBURGH OF UPMC, we believe parents and guardians can contribute to the successful use of these devices and invite you to participate. Please read the following information to learn about their use and how you can help.

Hearing Aids

Hearing aids are delicate instruments that need attention to ensure good operation. Before you put the hearing aid on your child, you should give it a quick visual inspection and listening check. Here is a checklist you should follow every day:

Visual Inspection

- If the hearing aid has switches and/or volume controls, check them to be sure that they are working.
- Check the earmold tubing for cracks, holes or twists.
- Make sure the tubing fits snugly onto the hearing aid.
- Make sure the earmold opening is free of wax and moisture.

Listening Check

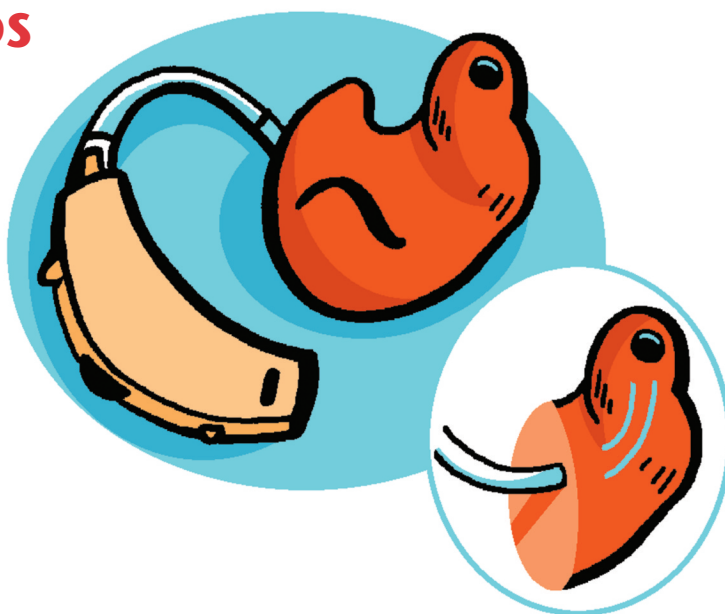
A parent or caregiver must listen to the hearing aid every day before putting the hearing aid in the child's ear. Listen for static or crackling sounds. By doing this daily check, you will notice right away if the hearing aid is not working properly. If you think that there is a problem, call your audiologist.

Cleaning Hearing Aids And Earmolds

To keep your child's hearing aids and earmolds working well, you must keep them clean and store them safely.

Daily Care

- Wipe off the earmold with a soft tissue or cloth each time it is removed from the ear.
- Check the opening for earwax build-up. If wax is present, gently remove it with a pipe cleaner, tooth pick or wax tool. Do not poke the earmold with sharp objects. Keeping the earmold clean will usually prevent wax from building up.
- Test the battery in the hearing aid (your audiologist will show you how at your child's fitting) and change it if it is low.
- Wipe off the hearing aid to prevent dirt or moisture from building up.
- Turn the hearing aid off and open the battery compartment when it is not in use.



- Store the hearing aid in a dry, cool place when not in use during the day, and place it in a dry-aid or dehumidifier overnight.

Weekly or As Needed Care

- Wash the earmold when needed.
 - Remove the earmold and tubing from the hearing aid.
 - Use warm water and mild soap to wash the earmold.
 - Carefully dry it and use an earmold air blower to remove moisture from the tubing.
 - Allow it to dry overnight and reattach the earmold to the hearing aid the next morning.
- Earmold air blowers, wax remover tools, hearing aid dehumidifiers and other supplies are available from your audiologist.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are hearing aids covered by my insurance?

Health insurance coverage varies by employer, so you should check with your insurance carrier to see if hearing aids, earmolds or assistive listening devices are covered by your plan. If your child's hearing aids are not covered by your insurance, Pennsylvania residents can apply for medical assistance through the state. Most children are eligible to receive medical assistance as a secondary insurance if they have a hearing loss. Your audiologist can give you information on how to apply for medical assistance if your insurance won't cover your child's hearing aids.

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What do I do if there is a problem with the hearing aid?

If you think there's a problem with the hearing aid, first go through the hearing aid checklist. If it still does not work, contact your audiologist. Also, notify your child's teachers or therapists that your child's hearing aid is not working properly so they can make adaptations until the hearing aid is repaired.

My child's earmolds still fit fine but the hearing aid is squealing. Why?

One reason might be the tubing. Check the tubing portion of the earmold. Look for cracks, tears or small holes, especially near the point where the tubing enters the earmold. The tubing sometimes can be replaced. Call your audiologist to have the tubing repaired.



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To see the list of all available patient procedures descriptions, please visit www.chp.edu/procedures.