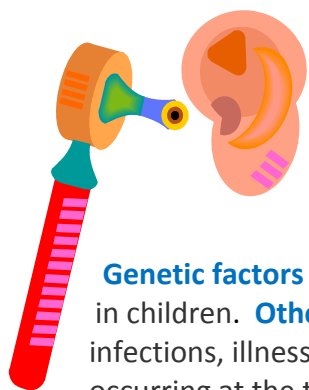


## Hearing Problems in Young Children and Adults

**Hearing problems in young children** may go undetected by a parent or caregiver unless discovered by a healthcare provider at a well child checkup. Causes of hearing problems may be from blockage by earwax, damage to the ear drum, or damage related to medications or diseases such as otitis media (ear infections).

### Signs of possible problems with hearing in children:

- ✓ **Consistent lack of response** when spoken to quietly
- ✓ **Consistent inattentiveness** to verbal and auditory cues
- ✓ Inability to follow directions
- ✓ **Limited vocabulary**, both receptive (words that are understood) and spoken
- ✓ **Difficulty hearing when the sound comes from the side** or behind the child
- ✓ **Lack of response** to music
- ✓ **Inability to distinguish the nuances** of language (the child can't tell when you are angry, sad, joking, etc.)
- ✓ **Difficulty in distinguishing similar sounding words** like door and store, and words beginning with f, s, or sh
- ✓ **Tendency to favor one ear** when turning toward a sound
- ✓ **Inability to hear low sounds**, such as the ticking of a watch
- ✓ **Turning the volume up very high** or standing close to the TV, radio, or stereo



**A hearing test may be one of the first steps to determine if your child has a hearing problem. Call your child's healthcare provider if you suspect a problem.**

**Genetic factors** are thought to cause more than 50% of all incidents of congenital hearing loss in children. **Other causes of congenital hearing loss** that are not hereditary include prenatal infections, illnesses, toxins consumed by the mother during pregnancy, or other conditions occurring at the time of birth or shortly thereafter.

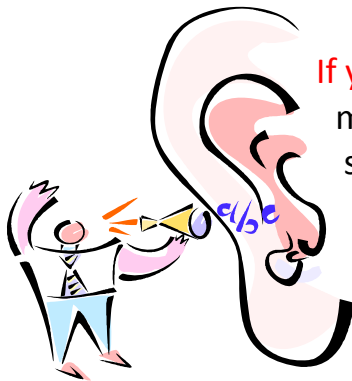
**Acquired hearing loss** is a hearing loss that appears after birth, at any time in one's life, perhaps as a result of a disease, a condition, or an injury.



**Hearing Problems in Adults** may be due to normal changes of aging. Other causes may be from blockage by earwax, damage to the ear drum, or damage related to medications, infections, or diseases like diabetes.

**Ask these questions to help you determine if you need to have your hearing evaluated by a healthcare professional:**

- ✓ Do you have a problem hearing over the telephone?
- ✓ Do you have trouble following the conversation when two or more people are talking at the same time?
- ✓ Do people complain that you turn the TV volume up too high?
- ✓ Do you have to strain to understand conversation?
- ✓ Do you have trouble hearing in a noisy background?
- ✓ Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?
- ✓ Do many people you talk to seem to mumble (or not speak clearly)?
- ✓ Do you misunderstand what others are saying and respond inappropriately?
- ✓ Do you have trouble understanding the speech of women and children?



If you answered "yes" to three or more of these questions, you may want to see an [otolaryngologist](#) (an ear, nose, and throat specialist) or an [audiologist](#) for a [hearing](#) evaluation.

**Get regular exams** with a hearing professional to check for wax, disease, and gradual hearing loss.

**Interested in more information? Visit these websites:**

- Mayo Clinic: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/hearing-loss/ds00172>
- National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/>
- American Speech Language and Hearing Association: <http://www.asha.org/public/>