

Centre for Hearing and Balance Disorders (Audiology)

Unilateral Hearing Losses

Unilateral hearing loss or single-sided deafness is a type of hearing impairment where there is normal hearing in one ear and impaired hearing in the other ear.

Patients with unilateral hearing loss have difficulty in:

- Hearing conversation or sounds on the side of the ear with the hearing loss;
- Locating the source of a sound;
- Understanding speech in the presence of background noise.

In quiet conditions, speech can be heard at approximately the same level for people with normal hearing. However, in noisy environments speech discrimination varies and can cause mild to severe problems depending upon the listening environment you are in and the level of loss in the affected ear.

Hearing aids and unilateral hearing loss

When there is a hearing loss in only one ear (mild to severe), one option may be to fit a hearing aid to that ear. This may help with:

- Hearing people when they are sitting on the poorer hearing side (such as in meetings & around dinner tables);
- Help with localising where a sound is coming from;
- Allow you to feel more balanced with sound.



Patient Information

A hearing aid may not be recommended if the loss in the affected ear is very severe or complete. In very severe hearing loss or single sided deafness, specialist hearing aids including CROS or BAHA may be suggested.

All hearing aids only boost sounds to work with your remaining hearing and do not sound like you have normal hearing, and may therefore sound different to your good ear. It takes a number of weeks to adjust to this new sound so please wear your new hearing aid as much as you can so that your brain can adjust to this new sound.

Further Information

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

RNID offers a wide range of information on many aspects of deafness and hearing loss:

Telephone: 0808 808 0123 (information line)

Text message: 0780 000 0360

Text phone: 0808 808 9000

Fax: 020 7296 8199

Email: information@rnid.org.uk

We hope you find this information useful however if you have any further questions or comments about this information, please telephone Ann-Marie Hawkins or Bernadette Parker on 024 7696 6444.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 6444 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Patient Information

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

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