

Sensorineural hearing loss

Information for patients

This sheet answers common questions you might have if you have been told you have sensorineural hearing loss. If you would like further information, or have any particular worries, please do not hesitate to ask your doctor.

What is sensorineural hearing loss?

Sensorineural hearing loss is a hearing impairment caused by damage to the hair cells in your inner ear, or by damage to the hearing nerve. It is influenced by the natural process of aging. This type of damage is permanent and cannot be reversed, though there are options for managing it.

Possible alerting signs:

Hearing impairment can have an impact on your life and make it difficult to communicate with others. Some of the hearing problems you may notice are:

- thinking other people sound like they're mumbling
- asking people to repeat things for you
- having difficulty understanding what is being said in noisy places
- finding it hard to keep up with group conversation
- getting tired from having to concentrate so much
- others reporting your TV or music is on too loud
- having difficulty hearing on the telephone

What happens next?

Sensorineural hearing loss cannot be cured, though it can be managed in ways that can address its symptoms and improve your quality of life.

- A hearing aid can assist in helping you with the symptoms of sensorineural hearing loss. Hearing aids are mechanical devices that produce sound waves that travel through the hearing pathway, making sounds easier to hear.
- Communication tips are used to help ease the strain caused by the hearing impairment.
- Assistive listening devices may be used, such as a loop system or flashing light doorbells.

Please do not hesitate to contact your audiologist for further assistance.

Who can I speak to if I have any more questions?

The audiology department can be reached by telephone or email, their contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 020 8375 1117 or 020 8216 4912

Email address: RF-TR.AudiologyAdmin@nhs.net

More information

For more information about the audiology service at the Royal Free London, please visit our website: www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/audiology

Your feedback

If you have any feedback on this leaflet or for a list of references for it, please email: rf.communications@nhs.net

Alternative formats

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please speak to a member of staff.

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