

during the first trimester; tests to rule out syphilis, rubella, or blood incompatibility; medical management of maternal diabetes; strict control of alcohol intake; adequate dietary intake; and avoidance of smoke exposure. Stress the necessity of routine immunization during childhood to eliminate the possibility of acquired sensorineural hearing loss from rubella, mumps, or measles (encephalitis).

Exposure to excessive noise pollution is a well-established cause of sensorineural hearing loss. The nurse should routinely assess the possibility of environmental noise pollution and advise children and parents of the potential danger. When individuals engage in activities associated with high-intensity noise (such as flying model airplanes, target shooting, or snowmobiling), they should wear ear protection such as earmuffs or earplugs. Even common household equipment, such as lawn mowers, vacuum cleaners, and cordless telephones, can be harmful.

Nursing Alert

Suspect hazardous noise if the listener experiences (1) difficulty in communication while hearing the sound, (2) ringing in the ears (tinnitus) after exposure to the sound, or (3) muffled hearing after leaving the sound.

Visual Impairment

Visual impairment is a common problem during childhood. In the United States, the prevalence of serious visual impairment in the pediatric population is estimated to be between 30 to 64 children per 100,000 populations. Vision impairment such as refractive error, strabismus, and amblyopia occur in 5% to 10% of all preschoolers, who are usually identified through vision screening programs ([Alley, 2013](#); [Rahi, Cumberland, Peckham, et al, 2010](#); [US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2015](#); [US Preventive Services Task Force, 2011](#)). The nurse's role is one of assessment, detection, prevention, referral, and (in some instances) rehabilitation.

Definition and Classification