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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/eardisorders.html>

Ear Disorders

Your ear has three main parts: outer, middle and inner. You use all of them in hearing. Sound waves come in through your outer ear. They reach your middle ear, where they make your eardrum vibrate. The vibrations are transmitted through three tiny bones, called ossicles, in your middle ear. The vibrations travel to your inner ear, a snail-shaped organ. The inner ear makes the nerve impulses that are sent to the brain. Your brain recognizes them as sounds. The inner ear also controls balance.

A variety of conditions may affect your hearing or balance [<https://medlineplus.gov/balanceproblems.html>] :

- Ear infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/earinfections.html>] are the most common illness in infants and young children.
- Tinnitus [<https://medlineplus.gov/tinnitus.html>] , a roaring in your ears, can be the result of loud noises, medicines or a variety of other causes.
- Meniere's disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/menieredesdisease.html>] may be the result of fluid problems in your inner ear; its symptoms include tinnitus and dizziness.
- Ear barotrauma [<https://medlineplus.gov/barotrauma.html>] is an injury to your ear because of changes in barometric (air) or water pressure.

Some ear disorders can result in hearing disorders and deafness
[<https://medlineplus.gov/hearingdisordersanddeafness.html>] .

Diagnosis and Tests

- Ear Problems [<https://familydoctor.org/symptom/ear-problems/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/sintoma/problemas-de-ocio/?adfree=true>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Ear surgery - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100016_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100016_1.htm]
- Eardrum repair - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100015_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100015_1.htm]
- Otoplasty (Cosmetic Ear Surgery) [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/otoplasty/about/pac-20394822?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

Related Issues

- Eustachian Tube Dysfunction [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/eustachian-tube-dysfunction/?adfree=true>]
(American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/disfuncion-de-las-trompas-de-eustaquio-es/?adfree=true>]

Specifics

- Conductive Hearing Loss [<https://www.enthealth.org/conditions/conductive-hearing-loss/>]
 (American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery)

- Ear Canal Infection (Swimmer's Ear) [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/ear-nose-and-throat-disorders/outer-ear-disorders/ear-canal-infection-swimmer-s-ear>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-otorrinolaringol%C3%B3gicos/trastornos-del-o%C3%ADdito/externo/infecci%C3%B3n-del-conducto-auditivo-o%C3%ADdito-de-nadador>]
- Ear Injury [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/injuries-and-poisoning/facial-injuries/ear-injury>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/traumatismos-y-envenenamientos/lesiones-faciales/lesi%C3%B3n-del-o%C3%ADdito/tumores-del-o%C3%ADdito>]
- Ear Tumors [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/ear-nose-and-throat-disorders/outer-ear-disorders/ear-tumors>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-otorrinolaringol%C3%B3gicos/trastornos-del-o%C3%ADdito/tumores-del-o%C3%ADdito>]
- Earwax Blockage [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/earwax-blockage/symptoms-causes/syc-20353004?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/earwax-blockage/symptoms-causes/syc-20353004?p=1>]
- Foreign Object in the Ear: First Aid [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid/basics/ART-20056709?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid/basics/art-20056709?p=1>]
- Otosclerosis [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/otosclerosis>]
 (National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/es/espanol/otosclerosis>]
- Perichondritis [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/ear-nose-and-throat-disorders/outer-ear-disorders/perichondritis>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-otorrinolaringol%C3%B3gicos/trastornos-del-o%C3%ADdito/externo/pericondritis>]
- Vestibular Neuronitis [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/ear-nose-and-throat-disorders/inner-ear-disorders/vestibular-neuronitis>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-otorrinolaringol%C3%B3gicos/trastornos-del-o%C3%ADdito/interno/neuronitis-vestibular>]

Genetics

- Auriculo-condylar syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/auriculo-condylar-syndrome>]
 (National Library of Medicine)
- Congenital deafness with labyrinthine aplasia, microtia, and microdontia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/congenital-deafness-with-labyrinthine-aplasia-microtia-and-microdontia>]
 (National Library of Medicine)

Images

- Chondrodermatitis Nodularis Helicis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/chondrodermatitis-nodularis-helicis/?Imiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Ear Diseases [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Ear+Diseases%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]
 (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Prevalence and Comparison of Otological Disorders among Children Attending Selected Urban... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40717054>]
- Article: Granulomatosis with polyangiitis presenting as isolated ear involvement: a case series... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40567100>]

• Article: Potential role of proprietary patent medicine vendors in primary eye and...
[<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40554477>]

- Ear Disorders -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Ear+Diseases%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Reference Desk

- Glossary [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/glossary>]  (National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)

Find an Expert

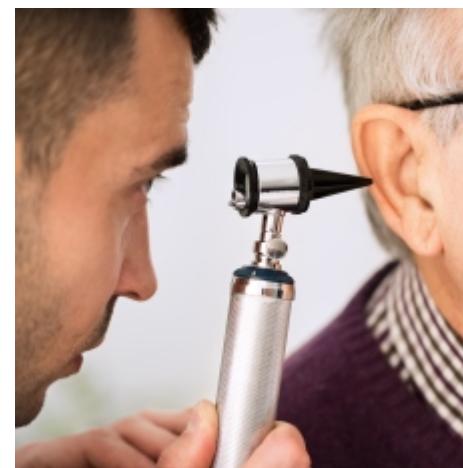
- American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery [<https://www.entnet.org/>]
- Find an ENT (Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialist) [<https://www.enthealth.org/find-ent/>]
(American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery)
- National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov>] 

Children

- Anotia (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/anotia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Aural Atresia (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/aural-atresia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/aural-atresia.html>]
- Cauliflower Ear [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/cauliflower-ear.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Constricted Ears [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/constricted-ears.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/constricted-ears.html>]
- Cryptotia [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/cryptotia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/cryptotia.html>]
- Ear Canal Stenosis [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/ear-canal-stenosis.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/ear-canal-stenosis.html>]
- Ear Injuries (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/ear-injuries.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/ear-injuries.html>]
- Eardrum Injuries [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/eardrum-injuries.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/eardrum-injuries.html>]
- Enlarged Vestibular Aqueducts and Childhood Hearing Loss [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/enlarged-vestibular-aqueducts-and-childhood-hearing-loss>]  (National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/es/espanol/acueductos-vestibulares-dilatados-y-la-perdida-de-audicion-en-los-ninos>]
- Flying and Your Child's Ears [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/flying-ears.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/flying-ears.html>]
- Microtia (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/microtia.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/microtia.html>]
- Protruding Ears [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/protruding-ears.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/protruding-ears.html>]
- Taking Care of Your Ears [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/ear-care.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/ear-care.html>]
- Tympanoplasty [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tympanoplasty.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/tympanoplasty.html>]
- What's Earwax? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/earwax.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/earwax.html>]
- Your Ears [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/ears.html>]  (Nemours Foundation)

Patient Handouts

- Aural polyps [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001638.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001638.htm>]
- Benign ear cyst or tumor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001033.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001033.htm>]
- Ear discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003042.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003042.htm>]
- Ear emergencies [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000052.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000052.htm>]
- Ear examination [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003340.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003340.htm>]
- Ear wax [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000979.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000979.htm>]
- Earache [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003046.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003046.htm>]
- Eardrum repair [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003014.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003014.htm>]
- Otosclerosis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001036.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001036.htm>]
- Ruptured eardrum [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001038.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001038.htm>]
- Tympanometry [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003390.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003390.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Aural polyps [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001638.htm>]

Benign ear cyst or tumor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001033.htm>]

Caloric stimulation [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003429.htm>]

Cosmetic ear surgery [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002988.htm>]

Ear discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003042.htm>]

Ear emergencies [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000052.htm>]

Ear examination [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003340.htm>]

Ear surgery - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100016_1.htm]

Ear tag [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003304.htm>]

Ear wax [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000979.htm>]

Earache [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003046.htm>]

Eardrum repair [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003014.htm>]

Eardrum repair - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100015_1.htm]

Eustachian tube patency [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001630.htm>]

Fusion of the ear bones [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001633.htm>]

Glomus tympanum tumor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001635.htm>]

Low-set ears and pinna abnormalities [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003303.htm>]

Otosclerosis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001036.htm>]

Ruptured eardrum [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001038.htm>]

Tympanometry [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003390.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Acoustic Neuroma [<https://medlineplus.gov/acousticneuroma.html>]

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Ear Infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/earinfections.html>]

Hearing Disorders and Deafness [<https://medlineplus.gov/hearingdisordersanddeafness.html>]

Meniere's Disease [<https://medlineplus.gov/menieresdisease.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Ear Disorders* is the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders [<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/>]

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