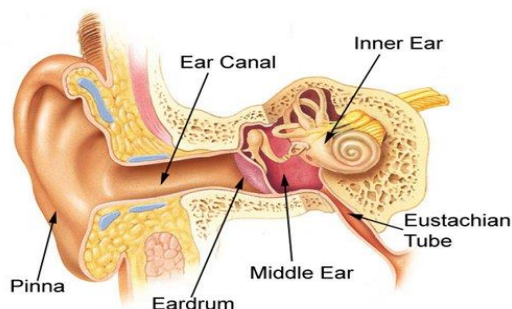


Cholesteatoma

What does this mean?

A cholesteatoma is an abnormal skin cell growth in the middle ear, behind the ear drum, as a result of repeat infections. It can cause a discharge from the ear, hearing loss and tinnitus (ringing in the ear). If left untreated, they can damage the structures in the middle ear. The CYP's severity of hearing loss will vary and cholesteatomas usually occur in one ear. CYP may be issued with behind the ear hearing aids however if the infection is active these cannot be worn.



Due to the infection, skin cell build up and the possible damage in the middle ear structures, it becomes harder for sound to pass through to the inner ear.

Implications for learning

The CYP may

- Hear quite well in one to one situations depending on the severity of the hearing loss caused, but listening in a busy environment and with higher levels of background noise can be more challenging.
- Find learning incidentally much harder. Overhearing is important in vocabulary and grammar development.
- Be vulnerable to underachieving. They can miss up to 50% of what is said in the classroom.
- Mishear language, particularly the pronunciation of new vocabulary
- Have greater difficulty concentrating and tire more quickly.
- Have episodes of dizziness or tinnitus which can disrupt their learning.
- Experience difficulty locating the source of the sound if only one ear is affected.
- May find social interactions challenging, e.g. break times

Ways to help

- Keep background noise to a minimum. Close doors and windows and switch off unnecessary equipment
- Speak clearly, naturally, at a normal pace, facing the CYP. Ensure your face is not in shadow
- Get the CYP's attention before speaking
- Use careful questioning to ensure the CYP's understanding
- Repeat questions and contributions of other pupils to ensure they have been heard clearly
- Use visual reinforcement – pictures, writing on the board, gestures.
- Provide opportunities to work outside the classroom for group work

Other resources

www.berkshiresensoryconsortium.co.uk
www.ndcs.org.uk

Related Sheets:

Unilateral hearing loss
 Mild/ moderate hearing loss
 Hearing aids
 Bone conduction hearing aids