

Microtia

Microtia (Greek for Little Ear) is a congenital (from birth) malformation of the pinna (external ear). In some cases, a smaller or incomplete ear canal and/or hearing apparatus may be present or missing altogether (atresia). Microtia is frequently accompanied by atresia because the baby's outer ear and the ear canal develop together during pregnancy. Microtia can be unilateral (one side only) or bilateral (affecting both sides). Microtia can sometimes develop as part of a syndrome.



Implications

- Microtia can cause a conductive deafness. This is where a sound is unable to pass efficiently through the outer and middle ear to the inner ear (cochlea) and auditory nerve.
- A child with microtia may wear a bone conduction hearing aid to help transmit sound to the inner ear. A bone conduction hearing aid works by conducting sound through the bone in the skull. Sound is transmitted directly from the vibrating part of the bone conduction hearing aid through the skull to the inner ear, missing out the outer and middle ear. This hearing aid usually consists of a bone conductor unit fitted to a soft or hard headband.
- When the child is older, they may have an operation to surgically attach an abutment to their skull so that they can be fitted with a Bone Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA)

Other resources

www.berkshiresensoryconsortium.co.uk
www.ndcs.org.uk
<http://www.microtiauk.org/>

Related sheets
Bone Conduction Hearing Aids
BAHA