



Having a hearing aid assessment at the hospital

Information for patients from the Audiology Department

Due to possible hearing difficulties, your GP or Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) consultant have referred you for a hearing aid assessment at the hospital. This leaflet explains what tests are included in your assessment and what happens afterwards. If you have any questions, please speak to the audiologist at your assessment.

Please refer to your appointment letter for where to come when you arrive at the hospital.

What will happen at my hearing aid assessment?

You will be taken into a treatment room and the audiologist will ask you some questions about your medical history and hearing problems. They may also complete a simple questionnaire with you, which asks if there are any situations or places where you find your hearing is worse, such as in crowded places or where it is particularly noisy.

The audiologist will then examine both of your ears with an otoscope, which is a small hand-held device that illuminates your ear canal and ear drum. To perform this test, a small tip is placed just into the entrance of your ear canal.



Patient having their ear examined with an otoscope



The purpose of the test is to determine the quietest sounds that you can hear at different pitches. The sounds will be heard through headphones and a head band which cover your ears and go across your head.



Patient wearing headphones



Patient wearing headband



Hand-held button

You will be asked to press a hand-held button every time you hear a sound. You may be asked if you can hear the sounds even when there is continuous background noise.

A further test may be needed to check the health of your ear drum and middle ear; this is known as tympanometry. The test involves gently placing a small rubber tip just in the entrance of your ear canal and slowly changing the pressure in your ear, it feels like a gentle flow of air in your ear canal. The test takes a few seconds for each ear and is not uncomfortable. If you need to have this test, your audiologist will explain what will happen in more detail during your appointment.

How do I prepare for my appointment?

- If you feel you may have too much wax or an ear infection, please make an appointment to see your GP at least two weeks before your hospital visit. The tests we perform can be affected or cancelled if you have a build-up of too much wax in your ears or have recently had an ear infection.
- Your hearing test can be affected if you have recently been exposed to loud noises, such as loud concert noises or heavy machinery drilling. It is recommended that you do not expose yourself to very loud noises for 48 hours before your appointment.
- Before your appointment you may find it helpful to think about the situations where you have trouble hearing and write them down to bring to your hospital appointment.

What happens after my assessment?

After your assessment you will discuss with your audiologist the results of your test(s). You will decide with them whether you need a hearing aid and if you would like to have one.

If you decide to go ahead with a hearing aid, you will discuss with your audiologist whether you will need one or two hearing aids.



In order to fit the hearing aid, it may be necessary to take an impression (mould) of your ear. This involves inserting a soft foam stopper into your ear canal and then filling your ear up with a smooth paste which takes approximately five minutes to set, this is not uncomfortable. Your audiologist will then send this off to the manufacturer to be made into a clear plastic ear piece to which your hearing aid will be attached at your fitting appointment (this appointment will be made by the hospital once your hearing aid is ready). For more information about having an ear impression, please ask for a copy of the Trust's **Ear impressions for hearing aids** leaflet or go to www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/audiology-leaflets/

A thin sound tube hearing aid fitting can be prescribed in some circumstances; but this depends on how bad your hearing loss is. Your audiologist will discuss this with you.

Before you leave hospital, your audiologist will provide you with an information leaflet about wearing your hearing aid and what to expect after your fitting appointment.

When will I have my fitting appointment?

You will need to return to the Audiology Department to have your hearing aid fitted. It is likely that your hearing aid fitting appointment will be within two months of your hearing assessment.

Contacting the Audiology Department

- Telephone: 01227 86 42 52 (lines are open 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday)
- Email: EKH-TR.audiology@nhs.net

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation