

# Glue Ear

## Patient and Carer Information

Children's Community Audiology



The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link:  
<https://www.wwl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets> or scan the QR code.

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## What is Glue Ear?

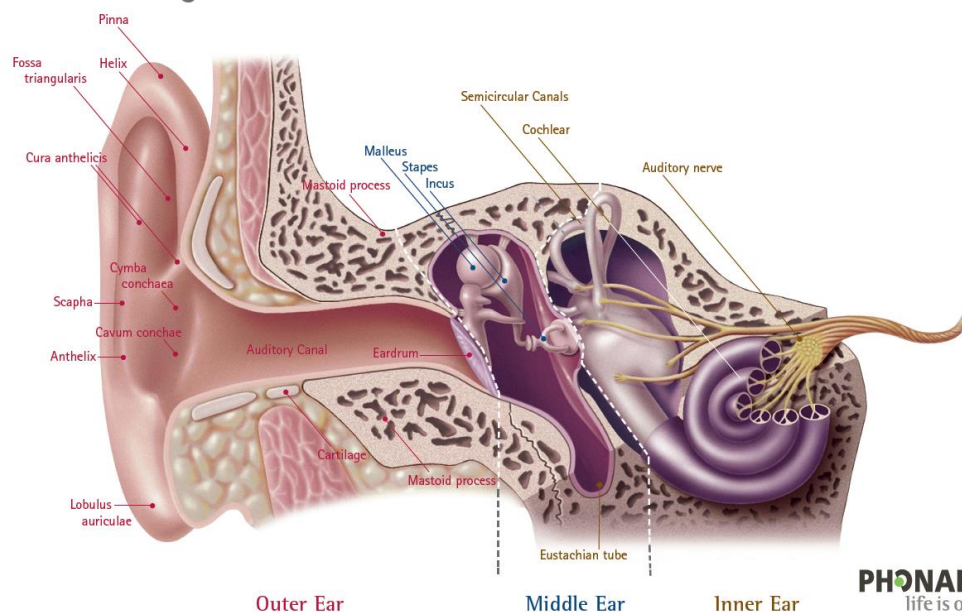
Glue ear is a condition which affects many young children and is more common in the winter months.

- It is fluid that builds up behind the ear drum in a space called the middle ear which is usually filled with air.
- It can affect one or both ears at any one time.
- It usually improves by itself but in some cases, it can persist and may cause hearing loss.
- It is important to have a hearing test to check how glue ear is affecting your child's hearing.

## Why does Glue Ear occur?

Following coughs, colds or ear infections mucus may remain in the middle ear space for a prolonged period. This is because the tube that connects the middle ear to the back of the throat (Eustachian tube) is not functioning efficiently; this may affect your child's hearing.

## Anatomy of the Ear



## How can I help?

- Attract your child's attention before speaking to him/her.
- Speak clearly and do not shout.
- Let your child see your face when you are speaking to him/her.
- Keep background noise to a minimum.
- Inform school, nursery or anyone who looks after your child to do the same.
- Household smoking or passive smoking may increase the risk of developing glue ear.

## Hearing assessment

Upon the identification of glue ear in association with a hearing loss, we will follow national guidance of active monitoring. Your child will be reviewed in three months for a repeat hearing test. If your child continues to have glue ear, alongside a hearing loss after their period of active monitoring, we will discuss the below.

## Continued active monitoring

- If your child has a mild hearing loss with no other concerns, then his/her hearing will continue to be monitored.

## Surgical intervention: Grommets

- Children with persistent glue ear, causing a hearing loss, may be referred to an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Consultant, where grommet surgery may be considered.
- Grommet surgery is safe however there is a risk of infection whilst the grommets are in. Grommets usually fall out after 6 to 12 months. The eardrum usually heals but there is a small risk of leaving scarring or a perforation of the ear drum.

## **Non-Surgical intervention: Hearing aid amplification**

- The use of temporary hearing aids may be discussed until glue ear resolves naturally.

## **Local Community Pharmacy**

Your local community pharmacies offer a wide range of services including information and general advice on symptom relief medicines as well as a prescription collection and delivery service.

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## Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

## Contact Us

Tel: 01942 822376 (Monday to Friday 9am until 4pm)

The Patient Relations/PALS Manager  
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## Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



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## How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, Braille, and other languages upon request. For more information, please ask in the department/ward.

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