

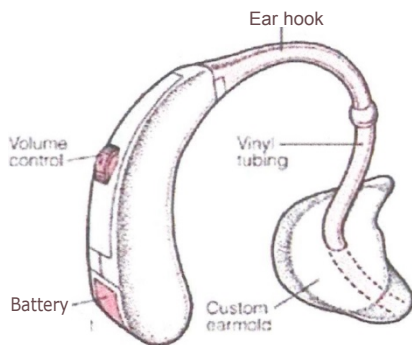


Setting Language in Motion: Family Supports and Early Intervention for Babies Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

How to Clean the Earmold

With behind-the-ear hearing aids, the earmolds are inserted into the ear canals. The earmolds will build up earwax and need to be cleaned regularly. It is recommended that each mold be cleaned at least once a week (more often if the child produces a lot of earwax).

Gently separate the soft earmold tube from the ear hook of the hearing aid.



Important: If the child's hearing is different for each ear, the internal settings of each hearing aid may be set differently. If this is the case, you need to keep the right and left hearing aids separate so as not to put them on the wrong ears.

Tip: Each hearing aid should have some kind of marker on it indicating left or right. This is typically a red (for the right side) or blue (for the left side) dot placed somewhere near the battery compartment door. If a marker is not present, a small dot of nail polish may be applied to the outside casing of the hearing aid. This can also be done to the earmold on the portion that sits inside the ear; however, be sure not to cover any of the holes on the earmold.

MODULE THREE Hearing Aids: The Basics

Charlotte Mullen, AuD,
Boston Children's Hospital
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program,
with Lynne Graham-O'Brien, AuD,
and Sydney Bednarz, BS

Wash the earmold.

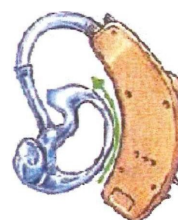
Put the hearing aids in a safe place to keep them dry. Wash each earmold with mild soap (such as hand or dish soap) and water. You can use an old, soft toothbrush to help remove any hardened wax or dirt. A small tool can also be used to gently remove wax or debris from inside any of the holes.

Dry the earmold thoroughly.

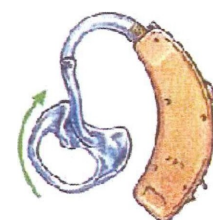
Dry each earmold as well as the tubing that connects it to the hearing aid's ear hook. To dry the tubing, use a forced air blower or an infant nasal bulb to blow dry air through it. (See the handout on Hearing Aid Accessories or the Module 3 video.) There should be no beads of moisture or clouding in the tubing.

Reattach the earmold to the hearing aid.

The curved edge of the earmold should match the curved edge of the hearing aid as shown below:



Correct



Incorrect

Gently push the tubing back up and over the end of the ear hook. The tubing should be very soft. If the tubing has become hardened (this will happen naturally after a few months), it will need to be replaced by the audiologist or hearing aid dispenser. When the tubing gets hard it also shrinks in length and diameter, changing how the hearing aid fits behind the child's ear and how the sound is transmitted.

For Additional Resources

Please refer to the Module 3 video for more tips and information as well as for additional resources. Also, visit our websites at www.bostonchildrenshospital.org/dhhp and <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>.