

# A Special List of Specialists



## Why should my child see different doctors?

Hearing loss is the number one birth defect in the United States. It often occurs alone, with no other mental or physical challenges to the child. Hearing loss can be a red flag for other illnesses and can be associated with over 400 syndromes, so it is best to follow the advice of your baby's doctor and see a specialist to rule out other medical concerns.



### Ears: An ENT (Ear Nose & Throat)

- Will check the ears for fluid, wax or other physical issues. (See Handout # 9 for more information)

### Hearing: An Audiologist

- Will test and monitor hearing, hearing aids and hearing implants. (See Handout #10 for more information)

### For Implants & Reconstruction: An ENT Surgeon

- If you choose a cochlear implant, bone-anchored hearing aid, aural atresia repair, or microtia reconstruction, a surgeon will work closely with your ENT to provide the best outcomes for success. (See Handout #10 for more information)

### Genetics: A Genetic Counselor

- Can talk to you about the genetic (and non-genetic) reasons for hearing loss.
- Discuss family history and help you decide if you want your child to have genetic testing to find out if the hearing loss is related to genetics.

### Eyes: An Ophthalmologist

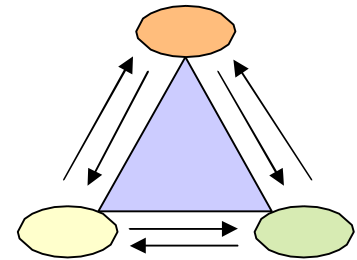
- About one-fifth of all children who have sensorineural hearing loss also have vision problems. Have your child checked out for any underlying eye disorders.

### Heart: A Cardiologist

- There are many syndromes that share hearing loss and heart defects. A visit to a cardiologist can rule out many heart defects or discover a hidden health hazard.

### Kidneys: A Nephrologist

- Things that damage the kidneys can also damage the cochlea in the inner ear. People with hearing loss may also develop kidney disease.



### The "Triad" of Care:

**Baby's Doctor (also called a PCP or Pediatrician)**

- Upon receiving the hearing screening results, your PCP will refer you to the appropriate specialists.
- All reports from the medical specialists will be sent to your PCP, be sure to ask for copies of the reports for yourself.
- Your PCP should discuss test results, the next steps, developmental concerns and milestones with you.

### Audiologist

- Responsible for your child's hearing tests, hearing aids, programming and supplies.
- Your audiologist will send hearing test reports (audiograms) to your PCP and ENT.

### ENT (Ear, Nose & Throat)

- Responsible for the physical health of the ear: wax, fluid, infections, etc.
- The ENT will send reports to your baby's PCP and audiologist.

**References:**

- [Annual Data: Early Hearing Detection and Intervention \(EHDI\) Program](#)
- [Hearing Loss Is Common in People with Diabetes](#)
- [Choosing Amplification Devices](#)

**Resources:**

- [National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management \(NCHAM\)](#)
- [Kids Health – Birth Defects](#)

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