

## **Sudden Hearing Loss**

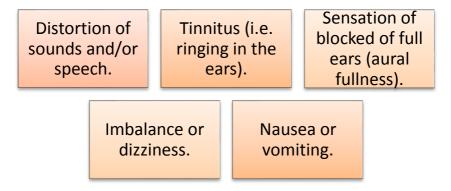


## What is Sudden Hearing Loss?

- It is a sensorineural hearing loss of 30 dB or more, in at least 3 consecutive frequencies, occurring instantaneously or rapidly over a period of 3 days or less.
- Its incidence is estimated as 5-20 cases per 100,000 people each year.
- It usually affects one ear (in 9 out of 10 cases).
- It should be considered a medical emergency, and you should visit your doctor as soon as possible.

#### What are the other symptoms that

#### associated with Sudden Hearing Loss?



## What Causes Sudden Hearing Loss?

There are many potential causes; <u>the most</u> <u>common are</u>:

- Infectious diseases (e.g. Syphilis, Lyme disease, Herpes)
- Viral infections of the cochlea.
- Trauma, such as head injury.
- Autoimmune diseases (e.g. Cogan syndrome)
- Ototoxicity (i.e. drugs that harm the sensory cells in the cochlea as a side effect).
- Blood circulation problems that disrupt the cochlear blood flow.
- Tumors affecting the auditory nerve.
- Disorders of the inner ear (e.g. Meniere's disease).
- Neurologic diseases/disorders (e.g. Multiple sclerosis).
- Unknown reasons.

However, the specific cause of sudden hearing loss is identified in only 10-15% of cases, and remains unknown in more than 75% of the cases.

## How is Sudden Hearing Loss Diagnosed?

 Assessment begins with a detailed case history and examination by an audiologist and an ENT (ears, nose, and throat) physicians. Both specialists are needed to provide the highest quality care.



 ⊘	
⊘ ====	1
$\odot$	

- The audiologist performs a full audiologic evaluation to determine the type (conductive, sensorineural, or mixed) and degree of hearing loss.
- The ENT conducts a medical examination and might request further tests (e.g. radiologic

imaging CT/MRI, balance tests, blood tests) to try to find out the underlying cause.

## How is Sudden Hearing Loss Treated?

- If the cause of sudden hearing loss is known, then it is treated accordingly.
- Steroids (e.g. Cortisone, Prednisone) are the most common treatment, especially when the case is unknown.
- They usually work by fighting inflammation, reducing swelling, and enhancing blood flow in the cochlea. They have been shown to significantly improve the recovery of hearing.
- They are usually prescribed orally (i.e. pills), but may also be administrated by direct injection through the eardrum into the middle ear and then the inner ear

## **Can the Hearing Recover?**

- If diagnosed and treated early, there is a higher chance that hearing may recover, especially if treatment is received within 7 days or less.
- If the diagnosis and treatment is delayed, this decreases the effectiveness of treatment, and hearing loss may not fully recover or improve.

#### What if the Hearing Does Not Recover?

If hearing loss does not recover or improve, it is important to...

- Preserve the remaining hearing by avoiding exposure to loud noise and using hearing protection in noisy places.
- Use hearing aids or other implantable hearing devices after discussing the suitable and available options with the audiologist and ENT physician.
- Receive counseling to address hearing difficulties and strategies to facilitate communication.

# لأن الوعي وقاية . .

إدارة التثقيف الصحي

Communication and Swallowing Disorders Dept.

HEM2.17.000479



Written by Health Promotion Department Designed by CPAV-PRAMA

@ktmc\_Rivadh

8001277000

KfmcRiyadh