



Profound Unilateral Hearing Loss

Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons

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Profound unilateral hearing loss is a specific type of hearing impairment when one ear has no functional hearing ability (91dB or greater hearing loss). People with profound unilateral hearing loss can only hear in monaural (mono).

It is known to cause:

- Lack of sound depth: any background noise (in the room, in the car) is flat and wrongly interpreted by the brain. The effect is similar to what happens when trying to hear someone speaking in a noisy crowd on a mono TV. The effect is also similar to talking on the phone to someone who is in a noisy environment.
- Trouble figuring out where sounds are coming from.
- Inability to filter out background noise or selectively listen to only the important portion of the noise in the environment.
- Frequent headaches, stress
- Appearance of anxiousness even in low noise situations
- Jumpiness
- Variable light dizziness
- Trouble paying attention to what people are saying, sometimes exhibiting evasive behavior.
- Misdiagnosis as ADHD
- Lack of awareness of other people's personal space and moods
- For sensorineural hearing loss, the lack of input coming from the damaged sensory apparatus can cause "ghost beeps" or ringing/tinnitus as the brain attempts to interpret the now missing sensory data. The frequency and the volume of the noise can increase according to one's physical condition (stress, fatigue, etc.). This can aggravate social problems and increase the difficulty of speech comprehension.
- Social isolation