

ENT

Troubles?



Here's a look at two common ear, nose and throat (ENT) conditions and how they can be treated.

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#1 Hearing loss

Hearing loss is a condition that occurs when one or both ears are not working properly. It can present right from birth or later in life, at any stage. And it's not just an elderly condition. Even children who previously had normal hearing can develop hearing loss.

In fact, a frightening number of younger people – specifically, 12- to-35-year-olds – are at risk of developing permanent hearing loss from listening to music and gaming devices at high volumes for prolonged periods of time, says DR REBECCA HEYWOOD, a British ENT surgeon in Singapore, with special expertise in managing complex ear and hearing conditions in adults and children.



In addition to loud noise exposure, some common causes of acquired hearing loss in adults and children include:

- build-up of ear wax;
- ageing;
- infection of the outer or middle ear;
- fluid behind the ear drum (known as “ear glue”);
- and
- certain medications that are harmful to the inner ear.

For many people, hearing loss develops quite slowly, making it difficult to distinguish any obvious change in hearing capabilities. For example, someone with mild to moderate hearing loss may not notice that the everyday sounds around them have dulled.

“By the time hearing loss becomes severe, only very loud sounds can be heard and those affected may not even know that people are talking to them at all at a normal conversational level,” says Dr Heywood.

How hearing loss can hurt you

Because hearing loss is an “invisible” condition, it's all too often disregarded. However, untreated hearing loss can have detrimental effects on all aspects of an individual's life.