

# the soundwave

A hearing loss can be categorized according to:

- which part of the auditory system has been affected - if the outer or middle ear is disrupted the loss is conductive. If the cochlea fails to function, the loss is sensorineural.
- when the loss developed - if you are born with or develop a loss shortly after birth it is called a congenital loss. If it develops at any point later on it is called an acquired loss.
- the degree of hearing loss - it may be classified as mild, moderate, severe, or

## TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



**Y**our ears are unique and very complex systems. No two individuals have exactly the same hearing loss. Throughout your life your ears are vulnerable to the effects of workplace and environment noise, genetic conditions, childhood and adult illness, and the passage of time. These influences combine to produce different types of hearing loss in different individuals.

There are three types of hearing loss:

- Conductive hearing loss is caused by injury to, or involves problems with, the ear canal, the eardrum and the middle ear bones which carry sound from the external ear through the middle ear to the inner ear. Many conductive hearing losses can be treated medically or surgically.
- Sensorineural hearing loss is defined as loss associated with the deterioration of the inner

ear. This may be caused by the natural aging process, noise exposure, viral/bacterial infections or head injury. Sensorineural hearing loss is not only a loss of volume, it can also involve a loss of the clarity of speech. Sensorineural hearing loss is almost always permanent.

- Mixed hearing loss contains elements of both conductive and sensorineural hearing loss.

Thanks to today's technological advances, most hearing losses may be helped through medical treatments or with hearing aids.

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