

ENT Terminology

A

- **Acoustic neuroma:** Also known as Vestibular Schwannoma, it is a rare benign (non-cancerous) tumor that grows slowly on the eighth cranial nerve. If large, it can affect hearing and balance.
- **Adenoids:** A patch of tissue located high up in the throat, behind the nose. They are part of the body's immune system and help filter bacteria and viruses. Adenoiditis occurs when the adenoid glands become infected, producing inflammation.
- **Ageusia:** Loss of sense of taste.
- **Allergies:** An immune system response to an otherwise harmless substance that your body deems harmful.
- **Ankyloglossia:** A foreshortened lingual frenulum. Commonly referred to as 'tongue tie' as the tongue becomes tethered to the floor of the mouth.
- **Anosmia:** The absence of a sense of smell.
- **Antibiotics:** Medications used to treat bacterial infections, including various ENT-related infections such as otitis media or sinusitis.
- **Antihistamines:** Medications that can help alleviate symptoms of allergies, including those affecting the ear, nose, and throat.
- **Aphasia:** The partial loss of the ability to use or understand language. Often the result of stroke.
- **Aphonia:** A condition in which the patient completely loses their voice.
- **Articulation disorder:** Inability to correctly produce speech sounds (phonemes) due to imprecise placement, timing, pressure, speed, or flow of movement of the lips, tongue, or throat.
- **Assistive devices:** Technical tools and devices used to assist people with physical or emotional disorders in performing certain tasks.
- **Audiometry:** A test to measure hearing ability, often involving the use of headphones and tones at different frequencies.
- **Auditory nerve:** Cranial nerve connecting the inner ear to the brainstem
- **Autism:** A group of inherited disorders in which noncancerous tumors grow on several nerves that may include the hearing nerve.
- **Autoimmune deafness:** Hearing loss due to an autoimmune condition, such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis

B

- **Balance:** The ability of the body to maintain equilibrium and remain steady, as well as locate their bodies relative to the environment. Depends on the labyrinth of the inner ear.
- **Barotrauma:** Injury to the middle ear caused by a reduction of air pressure.
- **Blepharoplasty:** Surgical removal of excess fat or skin from the eyelid, typically to correct vision obstruction or to improve the appearance of the eyes.
- **Brain stem implant:** A device that substitutes for an injured or diseased part of the nervous system to enhance function.

C

- **Cerumen:** Commonly known as earwax; yellow secretion from glands in the outer ear.
 - **Cochlea:** Part of the ear that contains both the organ of hearing (the cochlea - a spiral-shaped, fluid-filled structure essential for hearing) and the organ of balance (the cochlear labyrinth).
 - **Cochlear implants:** Implantable devices that provide a sense of sound to individuals with severe hearing loss.
 - **Conductive hearing loss:** Disruption in the normal hearing process, often due to problems with the ear canal, eardrum, or middle ear and its little bones.
-

D

- **Deafness:** Complete or partial loss of ability to use or understand language; usually caused by stroke, brain disease, or injury.
 - **Decibel:** Measurement unit of intensity or loudness of sound.
 - **Decongestants:** Medications taken orally, inhaled, or applied topically to relieve sinus blockage and improve nasal airflow. Used to relieve discomfort from respiratory illness symptoms or from eustachian tube discomfort.
 - **Dyspraxia:** Inability to make a voluntary movement despite having normal muscle function.
 - **Dysphagia:** Difficulty swallowing, which can be caused by various conditions affecting the throat or esophagus.
-

E

- **Eardrum (tympanic membrane):** Membrane separating the middle ear and inner ear.
 - **Ear infection: viral or bacterial infection in the ear.**
 - **Ear microsuction:** A procedure to remove earwax and other debris from the ear using a microscope and gentle suction.
 - **Edema:** Swelling due to fluid buildup.
 - **Endolymph:** Fluid in the labyrinth.
 - **Epley's Maneuver:** A series of head and body movements used to treat benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV).
 - **Epistaxis (nose bleeding):** Bleeding from the nose, which can be caused by various factors, including trauma, dry air, or underlying health conditions.
 - **Eustachian tube:** A tube that connects the middle ear to the back of the nose and throat. It helps equalize pressure in the middle ear.
 - **Eustachian tube function:** The Eustachian tube helps equalize pressure in the middle ear and drains any fluid.
-

G

- **Grommet application:** Surgical procedure used to treat conditions such as glue ear (otitis media with effusion) that lead to conductive hearing loss.
-

H

- **Hair cells:** sensory cells in the inner ear responsible for transforming sound waves into nerve impulses.
 - **Hearing aid:** electronic device that amplifies sound in the ear to improve the patient's hearing ability.
-

I

- **Inner ear:** The part of the ear containing structures such as the cochlea and labyrinth.
-

L

- **Labyrinthitis:** Inflammation of the inner ear, leading to symptoms such as dizziness and loss of balance.
 - **Language disorders:** Difficulties with verbal communication or the ability to use symbolic communication systems such as writing.
 - **Laryngitis:** Inflammation of the larynx, which may cause pain, and hoarseness or loss of the voice.
 - **Laryngoscope:** A medical instrument used to examine the larynx (voice box).
 - **Larynx:** The voice box, located in the throat. It contains the vocal cords.
-

M

- **Mastoid:** A bony prominence behind the ear.
- **Mastoid Surgery:** A surgical procedure to remove infected mastoid air cells.
- **Meniere's disease:** A disorder of the inner ear characterized by episodes of vertigo, tinnitus, and hearing loss.
- **Middle ear:** The space behind the eardrum that contains the three small bones (ossicles) that transmit sound vibrations to the inner ear.
- **Motor speech disorders:** Inability to exchange information with others due to hearing, speech, and/or language problems caused by impairment of the nervous system.
- **Mouth sores:** Irritation and inflammation of the mouth, often causing discomfort or pain.
- **Mucociliary clearance:** The process by which mucus and debris are moved out of the airways by the coordinated beating of cilia.
- **Myringotomy:** A surgical incision of the eardrum to drain fluid, typically performed to relieve painful pressure in the middle ear caused by ear or respiratory infections.

N

- **Nasal endoscopy:** A procedure to examine the nasal passages and sinuses using a thin, flexible tube with a light and camera.
 - **Nasal polyp:** A rounded part of the nasal lining, which may extend into the nasal passages.
 - **Nasal reconstructive surgery:** Reconstructive surgery of the nasal structure, typically after injury or to correct congenital conditions.
 - **Neurosensory hearing loss:** Hearing loss caused by damage to the sensory cells and/or nerve fibers of the inner ear.
 - **Noise-induced hearing loss:** Hearing loss caused by exposure to very loud sounds or sounds at various loudness levels.
-

O

- **Ossicular chain:** The chain of three tiny bones in the middle ear that transmit sound from the eardrum to the inner ear.
 - **Otitis media:** Inflammation of the middle ear, often caused by infection.
 - **Otitis externa:** Inflammation of the outer ear, which extends into the auditory canal.
 - **Otalgia:** Refers to pain that originates from the ear. It can be caused by various conditions, including ear infections, injury, or referred pain from other areas, such as the throat or teeth.
 - **Otoacoustic emissions:** Low-intensity sounds produced by the inner ear. These are measurable using a sensitive microphone in the inner ear.
 - **Otoplasty:** Ear correction surgery to improve the appearance or function of the outer ears. Typically involves reshaping, moving or resizing the ears.
 - **Otorrhea (ear discharge):** Discharge from the ear, often a sign of infection or other ear-related issues.
 - **Ototoxic drugs:** Medications that can damage the inner ear and cause hearing loss or balance problems.
 - **Outer ear:** External part of the ear, including the pinnae (auricle) and ear canal.
-

P

- **Pharyngitis:** Inflammation of the throat, often resulting in a sore throat.
 - **Pharynx:** The back of the throat.
 - **Pseudoephedrine:** A commonly prescribed nasal decongestant.
-

R

- **Rhinoplasty:** Nasal surgery, typically for cosmetic or functional improvement of the nose.
-

S

- **Sensorineural hearing loss:** Hearing impairment due to damage to sensory cells and nerve fibers of the inner ear.
 - **Septoplasty:** Surgical correction of a deviated septum, which can improve nasal breathing and reduce sinus issues.
 - **Sinusitis:** Inflammation of the sinuses, often caused by infection.
 - **Sinus surgery:** Surgical procedure to alleviate sinus blockage and improve breathing.
 - **Speech therapy:** A specialized form of therapy to address voice disorders and improve vocal function.
 - **Steroids:** Anti-inflammatory medications that can be used to reduce swelling and inflammation in the ear, nose, or throat.
 - **Stapedectomy:** Surgical removal of part or all of the stapes bone in the middle ear, often performed to improve hearing in cases of otosclerosis.
 - **Sudden deafness:** Sudden loss of hearing ability due to exposure to permanently damaging sounds, explosions, or viral infection.
 - **Swallowing disorders:** Difficulties in moving food, liquid, saliva, and/or pills from the mouth to the stomach.
-

T

- **Throat cancer:** Cancer that develops in the throat, the voice box, or the tonsils.
 - **Tinnitus:** A ringing or buzzing in the ears, often associated with hearing loss or other ear-related issues.
 - **Tonsillectomy:** Surgical removal of the tonsils, often performed to treat recurrent tonsillitis or breathing difficulties.
 - **Tonsils:** Two small masses of lymphoid tissue located on either side of the back of the throat. They help fight infections.
 - **Tympanometry:** A test to assess the movement of the eardrum and the pressure in the middle ear.
 - **Tympanic membrane (eardrum):** A membrane separating the middle ear and inner ear.
-

V

- **Vestibule: Bony cavity of the inner ear.**
- **Vestibular testing:** A series of tests to evaluate the function of the balance system, including the inner ear and related nerves.
- **Vertigo:** A sensation of spinning or dizziness, often related to inner ear or vestibular system issues.
- **Vocal cords:** Folds of tissue in the larynx that are key to creating sounds through vocalization.
- **Voice:** The sound produced by the vocal cords and resonated in the throat and mouth.
- **Voice disorders:** Any condition that affects the pitch, loudness, or quality of the voice.