

## **Hearing Loss in Alstrom Syndrome**

Linda McEwan  
Audiologist

Hearing loss can be difficult to detect in very young children. In Alstrom syndrome it appears that hearing problems develop after the visual problems and can present as early as the pre-school child. These children may suffer with repeated ear infections, which can lead to a Conductive deafness. Parents need to be vigilant towards hearing loss.

The first signs of a hearing loss

- Difficulty following conversation in background noise
- Changes in speech and understanding
- Appearing to shout
- Disruptive or difficult behaviour
- Turning the TV up louder than other members of the family
- Learning difficulties

If there is doubt about the child's hearing, a hearing test will provide evidence of the child's hearing levels. An Audiologist can undertake this.

In the case of children with Alstrom Syndrome regular monitoring of hearing is important. It is suggested that this should occur on an annual basis.

Some Alstrom patients have developed a sensory-neural hearing loss. Once this has been diagnosed hearing aids are usually fitted. It is important that these are regularly maintained. Digital hearing aids may be suitable for your child – ask your Audiologist.

Additional equipment such as FM amplifiers, loop systems and telephones with telecoils will provide additional help for your child at home and school.

A hearing support teacher will provide any extra advice and support to ensure your child has the maximum advantage in the educational system.