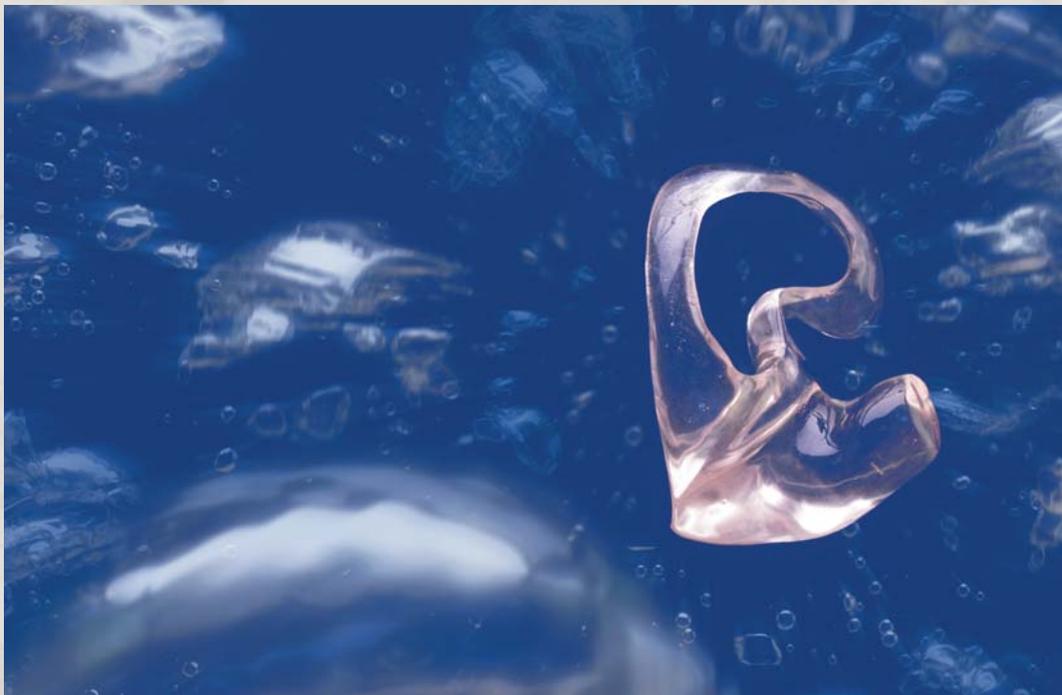


The earmould

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The earmould is an important part of the hearing aid and has a significant influence on sound quality



This is the second in a series of brochures from Widex on hearing and hearing-related matters.

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high definition hearing

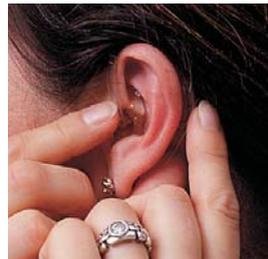
The function of the earmould

The earmould conducts sound from a behind-the-ear (BTE) type of hearing aid into the ear. It is manufactured from an impression cast to be an exact replica of the shape of the ear. The earmould also helps ensure that the hearing aid rests securely on the ear.

A well-fitting earmould helps prevent feedback whistling from the hearing aid by preventing sound leakage. A vent channel in the earmould can reduce the sensation of a plugged up ear, or of speaking in a barrel.

It is important that the earmould's tube to the hearing aid is of the correct length and is clean, unbroken and soft. If the tube is too short, the user may feel an uncomfortable pull on the earmould; and if it is too long, it will be difficult to keep the hearing aid in place behind the ear. A tube of incorrect length can also form a pinched bend, which could block the sound.

It is also very important to keep the earmould clean and to position it correctly in the ear. Otherwise the sound from the hearing aid may not be correctly channelled into the ear and could possibly cause the user to give up wearing the hearing aid because its sound quality seems poor.



Inserting the earmould into the ear



Turn off the hearing aid, or turn the volume all the way down. The broad curve of the earmould should be towards the back of the user's head, and the elbow of the earmould should point upwards. Holding the elbow, insert the earmould into the ear from behind at a slanting angle. It may be helpful to gently pull the outer ear backwards and upwards so that the ear canal widens and slightly straightens. The pointed part above the broad curve of the earmould should be carefully placed under the fold of skin in the outer ear. Earmoulds slip easily into place in some people's ears, while in others they must be gently "rocked" into place. It is important to be gentle. The lining of the ear canal is sensitive and can easily become sore or irritated.

When removing the earmould from the ear, turn off the hearing aid, or turn the volume all the way down. Then gently pull the earmould out of the ear.

Cleaning and maintaining the earmould



The need for cleaning an earmould differs from one person to another, but for most people once or twice a week is sufficient.



Carefully ease the tube, which is connected to the earmould, from the hearing aid hook.



You can then rinse the earmould and tube in lukewarm running water.



Put the earmould and tube in a bowl of mild soapy water, or in an effervescent solution similar to that used for cleaning dentures. Let it soak for at least 10 minutes so that any earwax or dirt is loosened. Never put cotton buds, toothpicks, pipe cleaners or similar pointed objects into the earmould.

Rinse the earmould in lukewarm running water.



Dry the earmould with a soft cloth. The sound channel is best dried using a small air blower, which can be obtained from a hearing healthcare professional. Put the tip of the blower into the tube end and puff air until all moisture drops are blown out. If there is a vent in the earmould, blow this dry as well and make sure that it is totally free of moisture.



Let the earmould dry overnight on absorbent cloth or paper, with the sound outlet end of the earmould pointing down, so any remaining moisture can drain out. The tube and the earmould must be completely dry before they are reattached to the hearing aid. Water or moisture can block the sound, so it is important that moisture is regularly removed from the tube and earmould with a small blower.

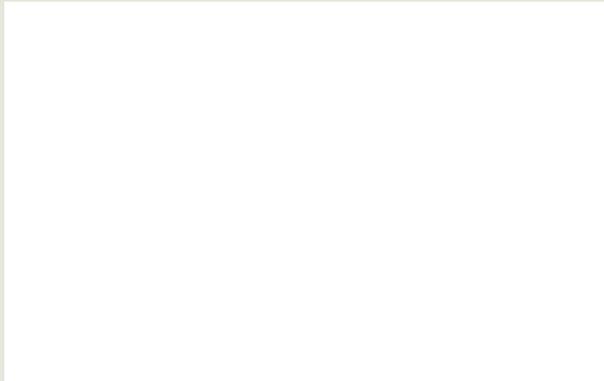


Attach the tube and earmould to the hearing aid.

The plastic tube should always be soft and flexible. You should exchange it if it becomes stiff and yellow.

For most people, the shape of the ear canal changes over time so you may occasionally need to have a new earmould made.

When the earmould and the hearing aid are in place on your ear, turn the aid on or increase the volume again.



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