

When Should I Be Concerned About My Child's Ears?

By Ann Woodhouse Plum, MD

Ear infections:

Otitis media, or an infection of the area of the ear behind the ear drum, is extremely common in childhood. In fact, the majority of people have at least one ear infection prior to school age. Children are particularly prone to ear infections due to sick contacts at daycare as well as due to their eustachian tube, which is what drains off fluid from behind the ear drum and equalizes pressure, is smaller and less rigid. If your child needs multiple rounds of antibiotics or if you are always told there is fluid in your child's ears, an ENT evaluation would be warranted as your child may benefit from placement of tubes in their ears and an assessment of their hearing. Likewise, if your child gets 3 ear infections in a 6-months period or 4 ear infections in a year, an appointment with an ENT to assess their ears is a good idea as they may benefit from ear tubes and a hearing evaluation. An ENT will also be able to identify factors that may be contributing to frequent or prolonged ear infections, such as allergies or large adenoids, and help address them.

Ear drainage may be the result of Otitis media and rupture of the ear drum, trapped skin or Cholesteatoma, a foreign body, or infection of the outer ear (Otitis externa). If your child has persistent ear drainage despite being treated with antibiotics, or has hearing loss following resolution of the ear drainage, an ENT will be able to help identify and treat the underlying cause of the drainage.

Hearing and Speech difficulties:

Hearing loss is extremely important to diagnose early in childhood. An initial hearing screen should be done shortly after birth. However, sometimes, infants do not pass this initial screen. Prompt follow up with another screen should occur. If a child fails the second newborn screen, it is a good idea to have them evaluated by an Otolaryngologist, who will try to determine why there is a hearing loss and options for how to manage the hearing loss in conjunction with an Audiologist. A failed hearing screen at school or the Pediatrician's office is also a reason to see an Otolaryngologist who will work closely with an Audiologist to further identify the degree and type of hearing loss, and how to treat it. Otherwise, if anyone who interacts with the child and has concerns about his or her hearing, or if the child complains of their ears, says "what" frequently, an evaluation of the hearing may be useful.

Hearing is essential in the development of speech and language. Therefore, speech difficulties or delays can be a sign of hearing loss. Infants usually babble between 6 and 9 months and say their first words by 1 year. Between 12 months and 2 years, your child's vocabulary should expand to over 50 words, and, by 2 years, they should be starting to put 2 words together. If these milestones are not occurring, it may be a sign of hearing loss, and an evaluation by an Audiologist and Otolaryngologist would be beneficial to assess the hearing.

Dr. Plum is board certified by the American Board of Otolaryngology and is fellowship trained in Pediatric Otolaryngology. She is Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology and Chief of Pediatric Otolaryngology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY 11203. Her UPB offices are located in Downtown Brooklyn at 185 Montague St., 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201 (718-780-1498), in Park Slope at 376 Sixth Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718-499-0940) and 470 Clarkson Ave., Suite H, Brooklyn, NY 11203 (718-270-4701)

Ann Woodhouse Plum, MD
Assistant Professor of
Otolaryngology and Chief of
Pediatric Otolaryngology.
SUNY Downstate Medical Center,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

For more information on our providers, services, location, and initial registration forms to make your first visit more convenient, please visit our Website at upbrooklyment.com
Follow us on Facebook! Search Brooklyn ENT



Ann Woodhouse Plum, MD



SUNY
DOWNSTATE
Medical Center



SUNY
DOWNSTATE
Medical Center

University Hospital of Brooklyn

UPB — Brooklyn ENT Otolaryngology — Head & Neck Surgery

The ear, nose, and throat surgeons in the University Physicians of Brooklyn faculty practice are the **ONLY** otolaryngology group practice in Brooklyn that offers:



UNIVERSITY
PHYSICIANS
BROOKLYN, INC.

1. Comprehensive ear, nose, and throat care of children, including breathing problems, hearing loss, ear infections, sinus disease, cleft lip and palate.
2. State-of-the-art management for patients suffering from tinnitus (ringing in the ear), including a full-time tinnitus specialist.
3. Cochlear implantation to restore hearing in profoundly deaf infants, children, and adults.
4. Pediatric airway reconstruction, including laser, endoscopic, open surgical and balloon-assisted procedures.
5. Minimally-invasive procedures for head and neck cancer, including laser microsurgery, endoscopic skull base surgery, and transoral robotic surgery.
6. Surgery for acoustic neuromas and invasive skull base tumors by a fellowship-trained neuro-otologist.
7. State-of-the-art medical management of nasal and sinus problems with image-guided surgery by a fellowship-trained rhinologist.
8. Rehabilitation of hearing and speech problems in infants and young children in partnership with the Auditory Oral School of New York.
9. State of the art care provided by 100% fellowship-trained Otolaryngologists with teaching appointments at SUNY Downstate Medical Center.
10. Training for 15 otolaryngology residents in one of the most competitive residency programs in the country.
11. Coordinated medical and surgical care at convenient practice locations throughout Brooklyn, including Brooklyn Heights, Park Slope, East Flatbush, and Bay Ridge.
12. Access to some of the leading physicians in the field of otolaryngology, with national and international reputations for excellence in research, teaching, and patient care.

For more information on our providers, services, locations, and initial registration forms to make your first visit more convenient, please visit our website:

Upbrooklyment.com



Please Follow us on
facebook!
Brooklyn ENT

OUR LOCATIONS

UPB-Brooklyn ENT
185 Montague St.,
5th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718 780-1498

UPB-Brooklyn ENT
470 Clarkson Ave.,
Suite H
Brooklyn, NY 11203
718 270-4701

UPB-Brooklyn ENT
376 6th Ave.
Brooklyn, NY
11215
718 499-0940