

Deaf Sports Australia is committed to ensuring all deaf and hard of hearing children / adults have equal access to all sporting opportunities in a safe and friendly environment.

Deaf Sports Australia and *Hearing Australia* has produced this information brochure to educate parents, teachers and sport organisations about how to participate safely in sports wearing a hearing aid and / or cochlear implant.



Options for purchasing safety gear:

Ear Gear Australia
www.gearforears.com

ALDS
www.aldsaustralia.com.au

Phoenix Hearing
www.phoenixhearing.com.au



Participation in sports at a young age or as an adult can boost a person's self-esteem, health, fitness and confidence. The social benefits to the deaf and hard of hearing person can include a sense of belonging when participating in team sports, community inclusion and can lead to greater achievements in school, sport clubs, regional and state championships, Australian Deaf games and international deaf sport competitions such as the Deaflympics, Asian Pacific Deaf Games and World Championships.

The Active Deaf program aims to promote the benefits of sport participation to deaf and hard of hearing children and adults around Australia.



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Hearing Aid & Cochlear Implant Wear in Sports

PARTICIPANT GUIDE



www.deafsports.org.au

PROTECTION OF HEARING AIDS AND COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

Protection for the hearing aid against sweat and is acoustically transparent is available, which will not alter the sound quality. Protection such as *Ear Gear* can reduce wind noise effects to the microphone ports.

Some protective gears have an option for attaching a cord which prevents a person's hearing aid from getting lost or slipping off. The snap clip is fastened to the athlete's shirt so the device cannot get lost.

Make sure the cords are worn on their shortest length and are positioned so that they do not pose a risk of strangulation.

HEARING AIDS AND COCHLEAR IMPLANTS SWEAT BANDS

Worn over the cochlear implant's processor or hearing aids, this can help to prevent moisture damage and allows devices to remain stable.

SPORTS REQUIRING A HELMET

Purchasing a sport-specific helmet may help protect the internal components of a person's hearing aid or cochlear implant from impact during strenuous activity. Wearing a thin 'sweat band' around the forehead and over the hearing aid or cochlear processor will also keep the ear devices stable while putting the helmet on.

Do not modify the helmet structure, as this may affect the amount of protection it provides.

TESTIMONIALS

"The Active Deaf Kids (ADK) program offers deaf children the opportunity to be active and learn sports in a fun and friendly environment. It also gives them the opportunity to relax and be themselves amongst children similar to themselves. We believe that the social benefits of this program are just as important as the physical benefits of sports participation."

Peter & Wendy Watson (parents of a deaf child).

"As parents of a young daughter with a unilateral hearing loss, we found the ADK program to be excellent in terms of generating interest in a wide range of sports, as well as a deeper understanding of the deaf community. Ellie enjoyed the sports clinics and made new friends whilst we were able to socialise with families who we wouldn't initially have been given the opportunity to meet."

Adam & Samantha Ford

"Cameron is a healthy and active 11-year-old, who has played in Hills Tennis Association since he began playing tennis at the age of 5. Throughout his time, he was the only junior playing HTA with a hearing loss. In 2012, he participated in the ADK program where for the first time he played tennis alongside others with a hearing loss. Cameron enjoyed the social experience of being around others with a hearing loss and was fortunate to be asked to represent SA at the National Deaf Tennis Championships in Adelaide in 2013. At this event, he was awarded the Allen Mann Encouragement Award."

Melissa Hutchesson (parent).

WEARING HEARING AIDS & COCHLEAR IMPLANTS IN SPORTS

The latest expert advice confirms it is perfectly safe for hearing aid or cochlear implant wearers to participate in sports.

Sports where hearing aid or cochlear implants can be worn safely without modification:

- Athletics
- Squash
- Lawn Bowls
- Tennis

Sports where hearing aid or cochlear implants can be worn safely with the use of sweat bands for comfort:

- Basketball
- Netball
- Football (Soccer)

Sports where a helmet is strongly recommended:

- AFL
- Cricket
- Rugby League / Union

Tip: wear a helmet that allows enough spacing over the cochlear implant site to prevent pressure being applied. Some wear a peaked hat backwards and a larger size helmet for better comfort. Please note that a helmet may help to reduce impact forces but will not fully protect the hearing aid or cochlear implant.

Ear guards can also be worn while participating in the above sports for protection and to keep the devices dry.

It is recommended that cochlear implant recipients do not wear external equipment (including processor and ear device) when participating in these activities.

