

## Auditory Processing

Auditory Processing is the term used to describe where sound is organised and interpreted meaningfully in the brain. In other words, it is the efficiency and effectiveness with which the central auditory system (the hearing portion of the brain) does its job of interpreting sound into something meaningful. When the hearing system is compromised, the ability to listen effectively is negatively impacted. An Auditory Processing Disorder can exist with or without a hearing loss.

Common reported issues in adults with Auditory Processing Deficits include:

- Lack of music appreciation
- Difficulty following conversation on the telephone
- Difficulty following directions or instructions
- Difficulty following long conversations
- Difficulty taking notes
- Difficulty with remembering information that was heard rather than read
- Difficulty learning a foreign language or understanding technical information where the language is novel or unfamiliar
- Social issues – difficulty reading others pragmatic communication issues
- Spelling, reading, writing issues
- Organisational problems

The cause of an Auditory Processing Disorder could be:

- Auditory Deprivation (untreated hearing loss)
- Trauma
- Tumours
- Periods of anoxia (lack of Oxygen to the brain)
- Congenital (born with)

Assessment involves a multiple step process conducted by an Audiologist.

Management is done through a 3 step approach:

1. Environmental Modifications – assess room acoustics and provide assistive options such as FM Systems.
2. Compensatory Strategies – these are strategies that can be employed in both a workplace and a social situation to ensure the best possible sound is received.
3. Treatment – the brain's ability to learn new tasks and relearn forgotten tasks or skills is known as brain plasticity. These skills can be enhanced by using the following programs:
  - a. LACE – Listening and Communication enhancement
  - b. ARIA – Auditory Rehabilitation for Interaural Symmetry

(Auditory Processing in Adults: Beyond the Audiogram., G.M. Whitelaw)