

# FACES:

The National Craniofacial Association 1-800-332-2373

## What is Microtia?

Microtia is an incompletely formed ear. It ranges in severity from a bump of tissue to a partially formed ear. In most cases, only one ear is affected. In that case, it is called Unilateral Microtia. If both ears are affected, it is called Bilateral Microtia. Unilateral Microtia occurs in 1 out of 8,000 births and Bilateral Microtia occurs in 1 out of 25,000 births.

## Why did this happen?

At this time, no one knows why Microtia occurs; however, there is nothing to suggest that the mother's actions during pregnancy caused the Microtia. Further research is necessary to determine the exact cause.

## Will this happen to other children I have in the future?

The possibility of passing Microtia on to another child is believed to be less than 6%.

## What kinds of problems could my child have?

In addition to the physical characteristics, your child may have some or all of these problems:

- About a 40% reduction of hearing in the affected ear
- Problems locating the direction from which a sound comes
- Ear infections

## Will my child need surgery?

Your child will either require reconstructive surgery to rebuild the outer ear or he/she may wish to wear a

prosthesis. There are several types of prostheses and ear implants that are currently available. We suggest gathering information about all the options and visiting with others who have chosen different options. The choices are increasing every year, so try to keep up with all of the current research. The prosthesis is glued to the head. If you choose reconstructive surgery, it is a 3 to 4 step process, usually done two to three months apart. Surgical procedures usually begin around 6 years of age, because the ear is 90% of its adult size, so it is easier to determine the size of the ear that must be made.

- Portions of ribs 5, 6, 7, and 8 are carved into the shape of the external ear
- The ear is then grafted into place and the overlying skin is draped onto the graft
- Other operations may be needed to rotate the lobule and possibly to reposition the cartilage framework into its final position

**New advances in procedures to treat Microtia are constantly being made. Be an advocate for your child!**

## How do I get help for my child?

Your child should be treated by a qualified craniofacial medical team at a craniofacial center. Currently, FACES has information on many of these teams. This is by no means a comprehensive list of all the craniofacial teams. Please contact FACES for details.

## Am I alone?

No! There are many families and organizations who will be glad to talk with you and help you with information and support. Don't forget books, videos, and web sites. The listing on the back of this page will get you started.

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website: [www.faces-cranio.org](http://www.faces-cranio.org)

*We provide financial support for nonmedical expenses to patients traveling to a craniofacial center for treatment. Eligibility is based on financial and medical need. Resources include newsletters, information about craniofacial conditions, and networking opportunities.*

## *Children with Facial Difference: A Parent's Guide.*

Written by Hope Charkins, MSW.

*Excellent resource for parents to help them cope with medical, emotional, social, educational, legal, and financial challenges presented by facial differences of their children. Look for this book at your larger bookstore chains.*

Available at: [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

## National Health Law Program

1444 I Street, NW - Suite # 115

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 289-7661

website: [www.healthlaw.org](http://www.healthlaw.org)

*Provides extensive information on health care law affecting families of children with special needs.*

## The Craniofacial Center

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website: [www.thecraniofacialcenter.org](http://www.thecraniofacialcenter.org)

*Visit Dr. Jeffrey Fearon's informative website that is very lay friendly and easy to understand.*

## **The following web sites contain excellent information pertaining to microtia:**

website: <http://www.earsurgery.org>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AtresiaMicrotia/>

This excellent resource is under the direction of Steve Kazemir and includes hundreds of members who discuss all issues regarding Atresia and Microtia. Steve also has a webpage that is dedicated to Atresia and Microtia.

<http://www.stevesplace.ca/AtresiaMicrotia>

Email: [skazemir@gmail.com](mailto:skazemir@gmail.com)

## Ear Community

*This website will help you learn about all of your options, self acceptance, advocacy, find helpful resources, and learn about the latest in technology for help with hearing loss and reconstructive surgical options. You will even find emotional support, financial assistance, and help on how to obtain bone conduction hearing devices. Most importantly, Ear Community is proud to help bring individuals and families together in the same situation through picnics that we host around the world each year.*

Website: [www.earcommunity.com](http://www.earcommunity.com)