PROJECT RESUME

Hearing as one of the five human senses plays a crucial role in our quality of life and integration into society, impacting on speech and language skills. Congenital hearing loss has been estimated to occur at an incidence of 1 in 1000 births, and as such has a major impact on the life of many children. Loss of hearing can be due to defects in the external ear and ear canal; the middle ear, where sound waves are amplified; and the inner ear, where hair cells process the sound waves and convert them to neural inputs. This project concentrates on problems associated with the development of the pinna and uses three mouse models of human disorders associated with external ear problems (Branchio-oto-renal syndrome, DiGeorge Syndrome, LADD syndrome) to help understand how the external ear normally forms and what goes wrong in cases of defects.

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