

**Effects of Recurrent Otitis Media (ROM)**

**On Communication Development**

* **The earlier a child has ROM, the higher the risk.**
* **Children with ROM before 1 year of age are at highest risk.**
* **The total number of days of ROM is the critical factor.**
* **Children with ROM understand communication at age-appropriate levels by 12 months of age.**
* **Children with ROM use fewer consonants, omit final consonants, and simplify multi-syllable words.**
* **Children with ROM continue to use phonologic processes longer than children without ROM.**

***Early Characteristics***

* ***Increased communication through pointing, vocalizing, or gesturing***
* ***Decreased range of vowels produced***
* ***Communicates with vowel-only jargon***
* ***Omission of or decrease in consonant production (number and range)***
* ***Increased length of time needed to integrate phonologic representation***
* ***Represents words as vowels or consonant-vowel combinations***
* ***Increased prevalence of final consonant deletion***
* ***Significant phonologic constraint on word production***
* ***Decreased number of words produced***
* ***Decreased representation of semantic categories***
* ***Decreased use of words***
* ***Few multi-syllabic words with syllable collapsing***

**Later Difficulties in Reading, Spelling, Writing, and Academics**

* **Sound representation, discrimination, segmentation, sequencing, patterning**
* **Phonetic encoding**
* **Synthesizing sounds into words**
* **Auditory memory for unrelated information**
* **Following verbal directions**

**Adapted from: Banigan, Rae L., A Family-Centered Approach to Developing Communication,**

**Butterworth-Heinemann, 1998.**