

HEARING LOSS: A COMMON MEDICAL PROBLEM

How common is hearing loss?

Hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition in the U.S.¹

Who should get a hearing loss screening?

Those who are aging; have hypertension, obstructive sleep apnea or diabetes; are obese; have continually been exposed to noise; are smokers; or have had COVID should get screened.

What are the signs of hearing loss?

Your ear may feel full, blocked or like it's underwater. In addition, your brain tries to protect itself by making it seem like others are mumbling or the TV is not loud enough. Family members are often the first to notice the problem, as patients may feel that their hearing is fine. The correct questions to ask yourself to determine if you may have hearing loss are: "Am I sometimes misunderstanding words?" and "Do I keep having to ask others to repeat themselves to me?"

What can happen if I don't treat my hearing loss?

Hearing loss can significantly impact your physical, mental and social health. It's one of the leading preventable causes of dementia² and is also associated with increased rates of falling,³ depression⁴ and loneliness.⁵ Hearing loss, vision loss and the death of a spouse can contribute to social isolation, all of which can lead to early death.⁶ In addition, research shows that untreated hearing loss can decrease an individual's annual income by up to \$30,000.⁷

Should I wait until my hearing is bad before I get a hearing aid?

When people wait eight years or more to treat their hearing loss, the part of the brain that interprets hearing begins to atrophy (shrink). This atrophy decreases the possible benefit of hearing aids.

What about over-the-counter hearing aids?

Buying these hearing aids is likely a compromise in quality. Over-the-counter hearing aids need cleaning, repairs, service, adjustments and assistance, just as traditional hearing aids do. Over-the-counter purchasers will still need to take care of these maintenance tasks, so buying them has no great advantage.

Does health insurance cover hearing aids?

Many of our patients receive hearing aid benefits through their insurance, such as TRU Hearing. Others are covered by the VA. Several obtain benefits through our office from Michigan Rehabilitation Services, a state agency that allows people working full time (more than 32 hours a week) to qualify for hearing aid coverage. It is not a poverty program, and many patients qualify.

What brand of hearing aid is the best?

We dispense many brands. Our skilled audiology team provides individualized care to ensure the correct hearing aid brand is chosen and customized for you.

My friend did not like using his hearing aid; will I also not like using one?

Many times, patients have waited so long before getting their hearing loss treated that the part of the brain dealing with hearing has atrophied, making it harder to correct their hearing. Some patients have not connected their hearing aids to their telephones or TVs or may not have had their hearing tested with background noise, lessening the benefit. Custom programming with Real-Ear Measurements increases the success of the hearing aid fit. Our audiology team can help you achieve the best hearing aid result possible.

How long does it take to adjust to hearing aids?

The brain takes six to 10 weeks to learn to hear and optimally adjust to new hearing aids.

I have ringing in my ears, a condition known as tinnitus. Can hearing aids help it?

Many hearing aids contain software to help suppress the brain from hearing tinnitus.

I have difficulty hearing when there is background noise. Is there technology that can help?

Directional and remote microphones can help with listening in situations with background noise. Our staff can assist with these apparatuses.

Is there a trial period for hearing aids?

Our hearing aids come with a 45-day trial period.



To schedule a hearing evaluation,
please call our office at
(248) 844-2936.



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1 CDC. (2018). Loud noise can cause hearing loss. https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hearing_loss/public_health_scientific_info.html#:~:text=

2 Lingston, G et al. (2020). Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission. *The Lancet*. [https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736\(20\)30367-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S0140-6736(20)30367-6/fulltext)

3 Johns Hopkins Medicine. (2012). Hearing loss linked to three-fold risk of falling. https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/hearing_loss_linked_to_three_fold_risk_of_falling

4 Mener, DJ et al. (2014). Hearing loss and depression in older adults. *J Am Geriatr Soc*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3773611/>

5 Nachteggall, J et al. (2009). The association between hearing status and psychosocial health before the age of 70 years: results from an internet-based national survey on hearing. *Ear Hear*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19322094/>

6 CDC. (2021). Loneliness and social isolation linked to serious health conditions. <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/publications/features/lonely-older-adults.html>

7 Hearing Health Foundation. (n.d.). Workplace hearing loss. <https://hearinghealthfoundation.org/hearing-loss-in-the-workplace>