

## Ask the Audiologist

**Q:** I saw somewhere that if you pull the little tab off a hearing aid battery and wait five minutes before putting it in the hearing aid that the battery will last longer.

**A:** That is true. An eighth grade student in Rochester, Minnesota, recently did a science project and discovered that if you wait five minutes to put a newly activated battery in a hearing aid, that the battery could last up to 30% longer. To activate a new battery, remove the sticker from the battery, which allows oxygen to mix with the zinc-oxide inside the battery.

Another battery tip we have found useful for our clients is to take the tab you have removed from the battery and place it on your calendar. That way you can keep track of when you last changed the battery and a good idea of how long batteries typically last for you. If you see it is getting close to the time to change your battery and you have an important event coming up, either change it early or take an extra set of batteries with you.



**Call our office today at 517-323-6222 to schedule a complete hearing evaluation and a consultation with our audiologist.**

**Audiology & Hearing  
Services – Making Life  
Sound Better**

## WHAT'S NEW *in Technology?*

### The Oticon Opn

**O**ticon Presents the Opn, the first hearing device proven to make it easier on the brain.

The brand new Opn allows you to hear what you want to hear, even in the most complex listening environments. The groundbreaking technology in the Opn processes sounds 50 times faster, giving your brain total access to the sounds around you. Because it works in harmony with your brain, it puts you, not your hearing aid, in charge of which sounds you focus on. The result is you understand speech better, with less effort.

#### The Opn exclusive technology helps you:

- Focus on the sounds you want to hear
- Understand speech with less effort
- Enjoy a fuller and more natural soundscape
- Shift your attention from one sound to another



The Opn not only processes sounds exceptionally fast, it scans the environment 100 times per second to give you access to 360 degrees of sound. It distinguishes between speech and background noise, enables you to identify where different sounds are coming from, and continually adjusts and balances all sounds around you. This helps your brain make sense of sound and gives you a natural hearing experience.

Hear better with less effort, and remember more with this amazing new technology. With the new Opn you will enjoy 30% better speech understanding, which will reduce your listening effort by 20% and you will remember 20% more of your conversations. Recent studies show that following conversation in noisy situations is the number one challenge for people with hearing loss. The Opn solves this problem by working in harmony with your brain to improve your ability to understand speech better and focus on what's important even in complex listening environments.

**Give your brain a break. Try the new Opn!  
Call 517-323-6222 today to schedule a demonstration!**

## Have You Ever Wondered...

- Why there is a w in the word answer?
- Who has more fun: blondes, brunettes or the really rich?
- Why we don't pronounce Wednesday like it is spelled?
- Why there is no left of way?
- Why you can hear an accent when people speak but not when they sing?

## You Know You are Getting Old When...

- You pick up what looks like an old penny but find out it has your birthday year on it.
- You feel like the morning after and there wasn't a night before.
- Your future is behind you.
- Someone mentions Woodstock and you think typewriter.
- You take longer to do less.

*"You're grown up not when you can take care of yourself but when you can take care of others."* – Anonymous

## On Aging

It is time to tell the truth about aging: the more you embrace it, the more you'll enjoy it.

...

"I have to exercise in the morning before my brain figures out what I am doing."

...

"We still play with a full deck, we just shuffle a little slower now!"

...

"I don't believe it's age that makes us forgetful, it's too many stupid things to remember!"

...

"Don't be afraid of growing older, you'll still do stupid things....only slower."

# Protect Your Child's Hearing, Protect Their Well-being

**N**ovember is Child Safety and Protection Month, a time dedicated to keeping kids safe through the education and prevention of harmful or dangerous situations. Audiology & Hearing Services is raising the community's awareness of hearing protection and the effects of hearing loss on a child's development and success.

Hearing is a sense that is often overlooked, even though it is essential to social, emotional and cognitive development. Hearing loss is often thought of as something that only the elderly experience, but this is not the case. Children of all ages can experience permanent or temporary hearing loss. Knowing about harmful hearing situations and how to prevent them will help keep your child's hearing healthy, giving them more opportunities to succeed both educationally and socially.



The audiologist at Audiology & Hearing Services want to make you more aware of the fall activities that can potentially be harmful to hearing. Sporting events both inside and out can be loud enough to damage hearing. Concerts are typically loud enough to cause damage to hearing, as well as playing a musical instrument in the high school band. If there is a child in your life that routinely plays music or goes to concerts, ear protection is recommended. Other fall activities such as lawn mowing or leave blowing produce damaging levels of noise and can damage a child's hearing.

Early identification and intervention of hearing loss in children can lessen the impact on a child's development, giving them the opportunity to live up to their full potential socially and academically. We are seeing a growing number of young people experiencing hearing loss earlier because of the lifestyle choices such as listening to loud music or playing with noisy toys. Because of this it is important to teach children both young and old that hearing is damaged by noise and they should start protecting their ears at a young age. No one is too young to use ear protection. If you saw the Olympics, you probably saw Michael Phelps three month old son with headphone ear protection on.

Audiology & Hearing Services provides a complete line of ear protection, both custom and disposable. There are earplugs designed for musicians that keep the sound at safe levels but allow you to hear the music naturally. We also have plugs designed for extreme noise such as sporting events and shooting. If you or a child in your life is exposed to noise on a regular basis, please call to discuss the type of protection best suited to their needs.

## 10 Totally Unrelated Facts:

1. 90% of people with tinnitus also have hearing loss.
2. If you sit for more than 11 hours a day, there is a 50% chance you will die in the next three years.
3. Your shoes are the first thing people subconsciously notice about you.
4. Uncorrected hearing loss gives rise to poorer quality of life, isolation and reduced social activity, leading to depression.
5. Half the presidents who died in office were from Ohio.
6. One in three seniors over the age of 65 have hearing loss.
7. Giraffes can easily kill a lion with one swift kick, often decapitating them.
8. William Howard Taft was the first president to play golf.
9. Dogs and cats consume over \$11 billion worth of pet food each year.
10. Hearing loss is the 3rd most prevalent disability among seniors, right behind arthritis and hypertension.

# 5 Surprising Things Treating Hearing Loss Says About You:

## 1. You're a go-getter.

Research has found that people with hearing loss who use hearing aids are more likely to tackle problems actively. Addressing hearing loss shows a willingness to heal with issues head-on. Most hearing aid users even say it has helped their performance on the job.

## 2. You value your relationships.

Healthy relationships rest largely on good communication. Treating hearing loss shows close family and friends that you want to stay connected and in a relationship with them. Most people who currently wear hearing aids say it helps with their overall ability to communicate effectively in most situations and has a positive effect on their relationships.



## 3. You will be active.

If you enjoy an active lifestyle, you are not going to let untreated hearing loss interfere. Treating hearing loss means you have every intention of keeping and maintaining a fulfilling life. In fact, people with hearing difficulty who use hearing aids experience greater pleasure in doing things and are even more likely to exercise and socialize more.

## 4. You love living.

The more exuberance you have for life, the less likely it is you let hearing loss get in your way. When you address hearing loss, you let the world know you love living life and you're going to live it with gusto. Research even shows that people with hearing loss who use hearing aids are more likely to be optimistic about life.

## 5. You're tech savvy and make the most of what modern life has to offer.

Sleek and cutting-edge, today's wireless hearing aids are amazing. At its best, technology offers solutions that provide the best hearing possible. Being willing to address your hearing loss through the use of state-of-the-art hearing aids means you're up to date on the tremendous advances in technology and are willing to keep up with the times.

If you or someone you love has a hearing loss, please contact us at 517-323-6222. At Audiology & Hearing Services we want you to hear the most out of life.

## Childhood Ear Infections and Tonsillitis Linked to Hearing Loss

As audiologists, we have secretly groaned when patients tell us they think their hearing loss is due to chronic ear infections they suffered as children. Well we will groan no longer because research is showing that they may be right.

According to recent research from New Castle University, common infections, such as tonsillitis and ear infections, may lead to hearing loss later in life. The study monitored babies born in 1947 to the present day, measuring their health, growth, and development. Now in their sixties, a quarter of them have had their hearing tested. The findings show that those who suffered from infections as a child were more likely to have a hearing loss in their sixties.

Reducing childhood infection rates may help prevent hearing loss later in life. Infections such as tonsillitis, ear infections and multiple episodes of respiratory infections during the first year of life were linked to hearing loss when people were over 60. These links persisted, even when factors known to influence hearing were taken into account. Hearing loss is often seen as just another sign of getting old, but this study shows that this is not necessarily the case; illnesses in childhood could have long-lasting consequences for hearing in later life. Hearing loss can have a big impact on a person's life, isolating them from family and friends and has been linked to other health conditions like depressions and dementia. These findings remind us that it is never too early to think about protecting your hearing.

## An Earworm

It takes only one passing toddler to get "It's a Small World (After All)" stuck in your head and a whole teeth-gnashing day to get it out. There is a better way to cure what scientists call involuntary musical imagery (aka, the common earworm). In fact, there are two ways:

**Option one:** Embrace it. Listen to the song all the way through at full volume, ideally singing along. The idea is that by confronting your brain with the full version, your earworm will end when the song does.

**Option two:** Replace it. Play a different song all the way through at full volume, in an attempt to chase away your earworm with something more forgettable. In one U.K. study, the most popular "cure" song was the national anthem, "God Save the Queen." On this side of the pond, try humming, "The Star-Spangled Banner" to clear your head before twilight's last gleaming.

## An Awkward Conversation

Somehow you're sitting next to the only person you've never met at a party and the mood is definitely uneasy. How do you draw him or her out?

**Open with a compliment.** The other person will feel a wave of positive feelings and you will be more likely to remember him or her later as the person with the "nice-hat." Win-win.

**Listen like a hostage negotiator.** The motto of NYPD's Hostage Negotiation Team is "Talk to Me" – that's because team members are taught to spend 80% of their time listening and only 20% speaking. Draw your subject out by talking about what he or she wants to talk about, nodding and asking follow-up questions along the way. The more you make your subject feel understood, the more he or she will enjoy the conversation.

**Have an escape plan.** The phrases "I won't keep you" and "Give my regards to (mutual acquaintance)" are your allies. When the conversation reaches a dead end, employ them. – *Reader's Digest*

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## Osteoporosis Increases Risk for Sudden Deafness

**P**eople with osteoporosis face a 1.76 fold higher risk of developing sudden deafness than those who do not have the bone disease. Osteoporosis is a progressive condition in which bones become structurally weak and are more likely to fracture or break, and more than 40 million people nationwide have the condition or are at risk of developing it due to low bone mass. There is a growing body of evidence that indicates that osteoporosis affects not only bone health, but cardiovascular and cerebrovascular systems.

In a study done in Taiwan, it was found that people who were diagnosed with osteoporosis had a much higher risk of developing sensori-neural hearing loss (nerve loss) than those without osteoporosis.

The researchers are not sure what biological mechanism is responsible for the relationship between osteoporosis and sensori-neural hearing loss, but they theorize that cardiovascular risk factors bone demineralization, inflammation and endothelial dysfunction may contribute to the association.

Patients who have osteoporosis should be aware that they need to seek medical help immediately from an ENT (ear, nose and throat doctor) if they experience a sudden loss of hearing. If treated immediately the sudden loss can be reversed in approximately 85% of cases. If you have a sudden hearing loss, do not hesitate to call our office. We will test you immediately and refer you to the proper physician. We can't stress strongly enough how important it is to have treatment within the first 36 hours of the incident.

## Genetic Predisposition for Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

**A** recent study has found evidence that some people may be more genetically susceptible to noise-induced hearing loss than others. Noise induced hearing loss is one of the most common work-related illnesses in the U.S., with troops in the Armed Forces being at especially high risk.

In an article in *PLOS Genetics*, the authors say that those found to be at higher genetic risk for hearing loss may decide to take additional precautionary measures to protect their hearing prior to noise exposure. Great advances have been made in hearing restoration, but nothing can compare to protecting the hearing you have and preventing hearing loss in the first place. The authors of this study say that more research is needed before clinical recommendations can be made or human testing is available to see who is at a greater risk for noise induced hearing loss. Until those tests are available – Protect Your Hearing – whenever you are exposed to loud sounds.

