

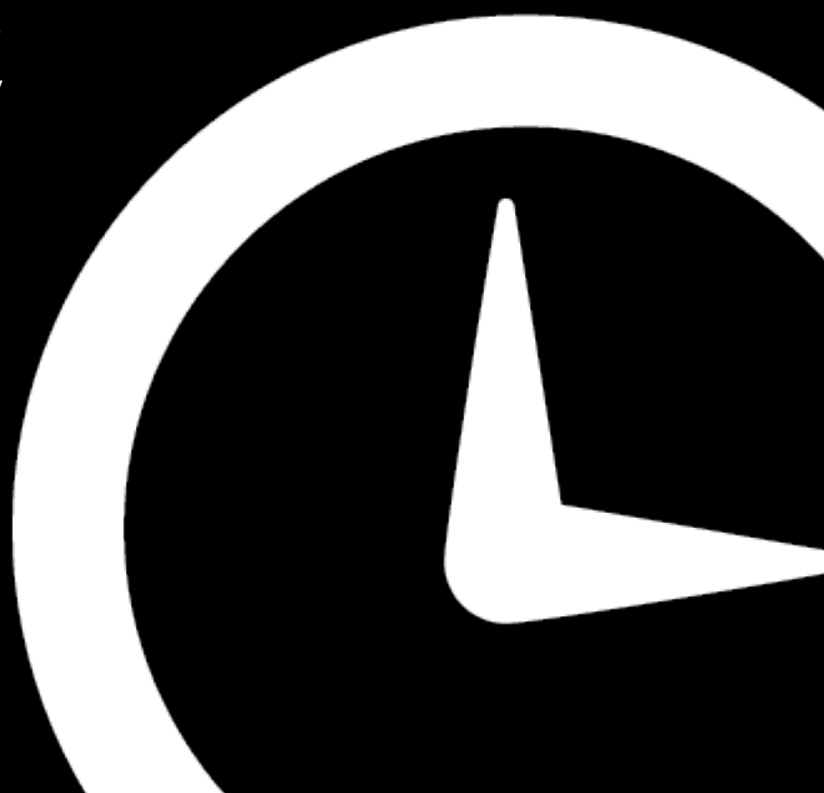


ADVANCED SPECIALTY CARE P.C.

14 Things to Know When Buying a Hearing Aid

IF YOU'RE WONDERING IF IT'S TIME TO INVESTIGATE HEARING AIDS BECAUSE YOUR FAMILY SAYS YOU NEED THEM...

you probably do! Problems usually develop slowly and subtly, hardly noticeable to ourselves. It is normal for people to go through a period of denial about their hearing problems. But, you cannot hide your hearing loss... your loved ones, friends, clients and associates already know you have it!



1

A HEARING PROBLEM IS MORE NOTICEABLE THAN HEARING AIDS.

It's important to remember that we are not just addressing the hearing loss; it's about communication. Hearing loss may cause you to give up favorite activities, rather than be embarrassed about a hearing problem. It can contribute to social isolation and avoiding difficult situations. In the end, you will end up spending more time and enormous amounts of energy going around your hearing problem rather than trying to solve it.

2

YOU ARE
NOT ALONE

Hearing loss is a very common problem affecting nearly 30 million people directly, and countless others indirectly. Most people over age 65 have some hearing loss, and nearly all people over age 80.

3

KNOW WHAT IS CAUSING YOUR HEARING LOSS

An Investigation of your hearing loss begins with an examination with an audiologists or ear, nose & throat physician. Certain types of hearing losses may indicate a medically treatable cause, for which you'll see the ear, nose & throat doctor. The good news is that most hearing losses can be helped... medically, surgically, or with hearing aids. In fact, most hearing aids are specifically designed for sensorineural or 'nerve loss'.

4

ONLY LICENSED PROFESSIONALS DISPENSE HEARING AIDS

You cannot just go to the drugstore and buy hearing aids off the rack like some reading glasses. Fitting a hearing aid is much more complex than fitting eyeglasses. Similar to dentures, hearing aids are a substitute for a natural function of the body and must be the right fit. Because of this, avoid getting a hearing aid from firms who only sell one brand of hearing aid. No one brand has devices to suit everyone's needs. You are likely to spend more with one-brand firms than you would for identical or better hearing aids from an audiologist who dispenses and services a variety of brands.

5

DON'T BUY HEARING AIDS THROUGH THE MAIL OR OVER THE INTERNET

What's good for one person is not necessarily what's good for you. There is no simple way in advance to tell which hearing aids will work best for a given person. We are all individuals with individual hearing patterns and requirements. Considered is your degree of hearing loss, your physical abilities and limitations, as well as those of your ears. This is why devices sold through the mail or over the Internet are likely to be ineffective (or even harmful)!

6

BETTER HEARING AID AIDS ARE WORTH IT

The best pair of skis will not make you an Olympic skier. However, your natural abilities are enhanced by better equipment. Hearing aid technology has improved dramatically over the past few years, especially in the way devices are adjusted to compensate for the natural patterns of hearing loss. The most sophisticated devices now use the same advanced technology as found in the microchips of computers.

7

THERE WILL BE AN
ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Adjusting to hearing aids requires some patience and effort. Just like dentures, or even new shoes, it takes time to get adjusted to new sensations. As hearing loss tends to occur gradually, so does readjusting to the world of sound. You may wish to progress from easier to more difficult listening situations as you get used to your hearing aids. It takes time to relearn hearing skills, longer for the more difficult situations, such as restaurants or parties.

Your audiologist will work with you for several visits during the adjustment period, and will be available for service in the years to come

8

THE ADJUSTMENT PERIOD VARIES FROM PERSON TO PERSON

Adjusting to the world of sound is like moving into a new neighborhood where the water “tastes funny”. After a while, the difference is no longer noticeable. The water didn’t change, nor did your taste buds. It is the brain that has become acclimated to the new sensations. Sound, like taste is a very individual sense. As with taste, the brain will get readjusted to the variety of sounds and noises all around us. It doesn’t happen overnight. Your expectations must be realistic.

9

YOU WILL NEED FOLLOW-UP CARE

It is vitally important to stay in contact with your audiologist during the trial period (and afterwards) if any questions or concerns arise. In fact, you shouldn't hesitate to contact the audiologist who fits your hearing aids – most people require more than one visit for adjustments, fine-tuning and counseling.

10

STAY THE COURSE AND CONTINUE TO USE YOUR HEARING AIDS

If you've grown accustomed to living with hearing loss, you will likely find out what the world truly sounds like with hearing aids. It is quite natural at first for higher-pitched sounds of speech, everyday sounds and noises, and your own voice to sound 'funny' or quite strange. However, with repeated exposure, these sounds become natural again, over time. Eventually, your brain will re-learn how to filter-out unwanted sounds. It is the brain that does this, not the hearing aids. To do this filtering, the brain requires good quality and complete information. Frequent, consistent use of hearing aids is necessary for success. Without daily use, normal sounds in the world around us will always sound funny, and your brain will not be able to interpret them.

11

DON'T EXPECT TO PAY MORE THAN YOUR AUDIOLOGIST TELLS YOU

Hearing aids from a reputable firm comes with a trial period, warranty, and follow-up services. Custom fitting and setting of hearing aids by your audiologist can take a few visits to ensure maximum benefit. You don't buy hearing aids, you purchase a comprehensive plan for hearing improvement, which should include counseling and follow-up care.

12

HEARING AIDS ARE
NOT MAGIC BULLETS

Unfortunately, hearing aids do not cure hearing loss, nor prevent it from getting worse. Hearing aids do improve the sound reaching the ears so that the brain can receive the proper information to do its job. At the same time, hearing aids do not cause hearing to get worse.

13

YOU MAY NOT HEAR EQUALLY WELL IN ALL SITUATIONS

Noisy environments are tougher to hear in whether you wear your hearing aids or not. Hearing aids do not eliminate background noise, but they can help the person with hearing loss to hear better in it. If you have hearing loss in both ears, most people will need two hearing aids. Noisy environments, in particular, can sound chaotic with only one ear. For certain situations, some people need more than hearing aids – a special adapter or pick-up for the telephone; doorbell and smoke alarm alerting devices; infrared television amplifiers for example.

14

HEARING AID DON'T LAST FOREVER

There is wear and tear on hearing aids. Think of the environment in which they're used – the ear canal – there's humidity, debris, bacteria, earwax. And though the technology does change and improve, it's more likely that your hearing needs, and the shape of your ears and ear canals, will change over time. You will need to see your audiologist from time to time for checkups.



HEARING AID FACTS

- Hearing aids can help you to hear better in most situations, so you can participate in and enjoy many of life's activities more fully
- Hearing aids cannot let you hear only what you want to hear
- Hearing aids cannot make already distorted sounds clear and distinct



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