

Facts About Hearing Loss

Approximately 36 million Americans suffer from hearing loss.

- More than half of the people with hearing loss are younger than age 65.
- Untreated hearing loss can affect your ability to understand speech and can negatively impact your social and emotional well-being—hearing impairment can decrease your quality of life!
- Hearing loss is the third most common health problem in the United States.
- **Signs you may have a hearing loss:**
 - Difficulty hearing people talk in noisy environments such as a restaurant, shopping mall, in a car, or at the movie theater.
 - People seem to “mumble” all the time.
 - Family, friends, or colleagues often have to repeat themselves when speaking with you.
 - You have trouble hearing people when they are not facing you or are in another room.
 - You have trouble following conversations.
 - You have ringing, buzzing, or hissing sounds in your ears.
- **What causes hearing loss?**
 - Exposure to excessive loud noise.
 - Ear infections, trauma, or ear disease.
 - Damage to the inner ear and ear drum from contact with a foreign object (cotton swabs, bobby pins, etc.) .
 - Illness or certain medications.
 - Deteriorating hearing due to the normal aging process.
- **How to protect your hearing:**
 - Wear hearing protection when around sounds louder than 85 dB for a long period of time. There are different types of hearing protection such as foam earplugs, earmuffs and custom hearing protection devices. Contact your local audiologist for custom hearing protection devices.
 - Turn down the volume when listening to the radio, the TV, MP3 player, or anything through ear buds and headphones. (Visit www.TurnItToTheLeft.com)
 - Walk away from the noise.
 - And, other than hearing protection, do not put anything in your ear!

For more information on audiology and hearing loss, visit www.HowsYourHearing.org.

Think you may have a hearing loss? Click on the “Find an Audiologist” link of the California Academy of Audiology web site at www.caaud.org to locate and set up an appointment with an audiologist in your area to get your hearing tested.

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