

iPods and Hearing Loss

Noise exposure is one of the largest causes of hearing loss. It can come in the form of gun use, working around machinery, attending concerts, playing an instrument or in a band, and even iPods and other music players.

iPods are the new craze of musical lovers everywhere. However, many people are unaware of the danger of hearing loss imposed by iPods. Researchers have found that approximately 80% of Americans are listening to their iPods at a harmful level when in a noisy environment. With the use of in-the-ear earphones or custom earphones only 20% of Americans are at risk. Many people today are using their iPods while exercising, riding trains, walking to work, etc., where competing background noise causes the wearer to increase the volume. When this happens you are at risk for damaging your inner ear, which could result in permanent hearing loss. Some signs of possible early noise induced hearing loss include: tinnitus (ringing) in the ears, hypersensitivity to sound, and trouble hearing in background noise.

Some solutions include:

- ❑ Listening to your iPod at a comfortable level or no more than 60% of full volume.
- ❑ Use noise-cancelling headphones while using your iPod.
- ❑ Purchase a set of custom earmolds that will protect your hearing as well as reduce background noise so that the music is more comfortable for your ears. These custom earmolds cost approximately \$85.00 and can be made in a variety of colors, swirled colors, and glitter.

If you are a musician, custom ear monitors can be made to help monitor your music at safe loudness levels. Research has shown that musicians reported their music has never sounded better, because they are better able to monitor the way it sounds. These monitors work by attenuating the sound so that those sounds most likely to cause damage are reduced, and by eliminating the need for traditional stage monitors. These can be used whether you're a guitarist, drummer, singer, or a violinist.

For more information please call **Physician's Hearing Center: 831-462-8260**

