



# Addressing Hearing Loss Sooner Brings Many Benefits

## Why is it better to treat hearing loss sooner than later?

Perhaps the most compelling reason to never put off a hearing test and treatment is simply this: **We “hear” with our brain, not with our ears.** When we have a hearing loss, the connections in the brain that respond to sound become reorganized. The phrase “use it or lose it” is very applicable here. When someone is deprived of sensory information such as hearing, the brain is no longer receiving an adequate amount of auditory stimulation to keep it functioning normally. **The longer the hearing loss remains untreated, the less the brain will eventually recognize and understand speech.** If the sensory deprivation continues long enough, recovery is very difficult.

Fortunately, for many people, hearing aids provide the sound stimulation needed for the brain to restore the normal organization of connections to its “sound center” in the auditory cortex so it can more readily react to the sounds that it had been missing and cognitively process them.

In fact, the vast majority of people with hearing loss can benefit from hearing aids. Dramatic new technological advances have transformed hearing aids in recent years, making them more effective, comfortable, and easy to use. And when hearing aids are no longer helpful, **cochlear implants** can restore hearing to those with severe to profound hearing loss. The sooner you identify hearing loss and start using professionally fitted hearing aids when recommended by an audiologist, the sooner you’ll begin to reap the rewards of better hearing.

## The benefits of early treatment on quality of life and health

Researchers are discovering a significant link between hearing loss and other health issues, such as cognitive decline, dementia, anxiety, depression, and risk of falling. To get a fuller sense of why it’s so important to treat hearing loss sooner than later, consider the following well-researched benefits of treating hearing loss:

- Relieves tinnitus symptoms
- Reduces progression of cognitive decline
- Boosts job performance and security
- Increases earning power
- Improves social interactions
- Improves quality of life

**Lastly, remember that periodic hearing evaluations are important for your health. Changes in hearing can be early markers for health conditions such as cardiovascular, kidney, and thyroid disease.** We will share the results of your hearing evaluations with your physician.