



Myths and Facts About Hearing Aids

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (www.asha.org)

Myth: Hearing aids restore hearing to normal just as an eyeglass prescription can restore vision to 20/20.

Fact: Hearing aids do not restore hearing to “normal.” Hearing aids do not “cure” your hearing loss, but they provide benefit and improvement in communication. They can improve your hearing and listening abilities, and they can substantially improve your quality of life.

Myth: You can save time and money by buying hearing aids online or by mail order.

Fact: By working with an audiologist, you are purchasing professional care and services to ensure that the correct hearing aid is selected and that proper programming of the hearing aid is completed. Other professional care from an audiologist includes:

- Hearing evaluation
- Referral for medical treatment (if needed)
- Hearing aid evaluation
- Verification of fit of hearing aid
- Instruction in how to properly use and maintain the hearing aid
- Follow-up care and support, and repair services
- Cerumen (ear wax) removal
- Aural rehabilitation services
- Tinnitus assessments and treatment
- Balance assessments and appropriate referrals (when indicated)

Myth: A hearing aid will damage your hearing.

Fact: A properly fitted and maintained hearing aid will not damage your hearing. It will not amplify sound past any dangerous level. Digital hearing aids amplify soft sounds the most, and loud sounds the least.

Myth: A milder hearing loss is not bad enough for a hearing aid.

Fact: Everyone's hearing loss and listening needs are different. If one's brain is less able to focus on speech in background noise, then that individual with only a “mild” loss may really benefit from aids.

Myth: Wearing two hearing aids is not necessary.

Fact: We normally hear with two ears. Binaural hearing helps us 1) localize sounds, 2) assists us in noisy settings, and 3) provides natural sound quality. Most people with hearing loss in both ears can understand better with two aids than with one.

Myth: The invisible hearing aids worn in the ear are the best hearing aids to purchase.

Fact: There are several styles of hearing aids, and all are “state of the art.” What is most important is that you purchase a hearing aid that accommodates your hearing loss and your listening needs. Just because your friend uses a particular hearing aid style does not mean you have to (or should) use that style. Your friend's style of hearing aid may be a totally inappropriate prescription for your needs.