PROTECT YOUR EARS
THIS SUMMER

It's summertime, and the livin' is easy. When the weather is warm, our natural inclination is to go outside, but it is important to take precautions to protect your ears during the summer months. Many popular summer activities that include the sounds of lawn mowers, power tools, motorized vehicles, sporting events, concerts and fireworks can be hazardous to our ears and cause long-term damage.

DO YOU NEED TO PROTECT YOUR EARS?

- Do you enjoy listening to music through earbuds or headphones?
- Do you ever attend concerts, festivals, or noisy sporting events?
- Do you use power tools or lawn mowers?
- Do you go hunting or shoot at a target range?
- Do you enjoy swimming at the pool or at the beach?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you need ear protection!

The following tips are recommended by the Better Hearing Institute, an organization devoted to educating the public about proper hearing health, and helping those with hearing loss benefit from proper treatment.

• Use earplugs. When you are going to be exposed to loud sounds, wear earplugs to prevent damage to your hearing. Disposable earplugs made of foam or silicone are readily available and will allow you to hear music and conversations while blocking dangerously loud sounds. Custom ear protection will perfectly fit the unique contours of your ears, guaranteeing a snug, proper fit and dependable protection. Custom ear molds can be made in our office. We now carry semi-custom Westone plugs to give your ears excellent protection at a more affordable price. Plugs are pre-packaged and can be purchased at any of our offices.

• Take measures to protect against swimmer's ear. When water enters the ear canals it can lead to a painful infection known as swimmer's ear. To protect against this, invest in a pair of swimmer's plugs. Dry your ears thoroughly after swimming, and make sure to tilt your head to the side to drain any residual water from your ear canals. Avoid swimming in water where bacterial counts are high (look for signs posted at the local beach).

Hearing Aid Trouble-Shooting Tips

Does your hearing aid...

...Whistle?
1. Remove excess earwax
2. Turn down the volume
3. Hearing device not inserted correctly in the ear

...Sound distorted or unclear?
1. Clean the battery contacts
2. Replace the batteries
3. Clean earmold and tubing with wax removal tools
4. Replace wax guard

...Make no sound?
1. Replace batteries
2. Check for clogged microphone or sound outlet and remove excess earwax
3. Change the wax filter
4. Make sure it hasn’t been switched to telecoil mode

If these troubleshooting tips don’t resolve your issues, you may need an audiologist to adjust your hearing aids.

Please give us a call at (847) 674-5585

Donate
The Gift Of Hearing

Hearing Professionals of Illinois is pleased to announce that we have partnered with the Lions Club Foundation of Illinois to participate in their Hearing Aid Recycling Program.

We have donation boxes at the front desk of each of our office locations, which makes it easy for you to drop off your old hearing aids. If you are ready to replace your current hearing aids or have old ones you are not using, consider donating them. You will be giving others less fortunate the opportunity to experience better hearing.

All used hearing aids are accepted – we’ll accept any age, brand or model regardless of condition. All donated aids will be tested, cleaned and refurbished. The Lions Club will then distribute the hearing aids to individuals with limited financial resources across Illinois. Pay it forward to help others. By donating you can change a life!

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Call to find out more information about ear protection!
Types Of Hearing Loss

There are three main types of hearing loss, categorized by which part of the auditory system has been damaged.

Conductive hearing loss involves damage to the outer ear (ear canal, eardrum) and/or middle ear (ossicles), this prevents sound valves from being carried from the eardrum to the inner ear. This type of hearing loss can often be corrected with medication or surgery.

Sensorineural hearing loss, often referred to as nerve loss, occurs when there is damage to the hair cells in the cochlea of the inner ear. This type of hearing loss is almost always permanent, but can usually be treated with hearing aids. Nine out of 10 patients with a hearing impairment experience sensorineural hearing loss.

Mixed hearing loss is a combination of both conductive and sensorineural hearing loss, and occurs when there is damage to both the outer/middle and the inner ear. Treatment may involve a combination of medications, surgery and hearing aids.

In rare cases, an abrupt loss of hearing occurs, with little or no warning. This condition, known as sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSHL), is defined as a hearing reduction of 30 dB or greater, occurring over a period of 72 hours or less. 90% of cases result in unilateral (single-sided) hearing loss, which may be accompanied by dizziness or tinnitus. Symptoms that often precede or accompany sudden deafness include:

- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears).
- Vertigo or dizziness.
- Fullness in the ear.
- A sudden loud ‘pop’ in the ear similar to what you’d experience with a change in pressure.
- Muffled hearing upon waking, or when trying to use the telephone.

If you experience any of these symptoms, see an ENT physician or audiologist immediately. Prompt medical attention offers the best chance for a full recovery.

Now Hear This

Where do you fall on the hearing loss spectrum?

MILD
Difficulty hearing soft speech or quiet conversations, or sounds such as a babbling brook

MODERATE
Trouble hearing conversations amid background noise, inability to hear the hum of a refrigerator

MODERATE/SEVERE
Difficulty understanding group conversations or hearing sounds such as a running shower or air conditioner

SEVERE
Inability to hear speech at normal volumes and sounds such as a toilet flushing or a garbage disposal

PROFOUND
Difficultly hearing or total inability to hear even the loudest of noises, such as a revving motorcycle engine

If you identify with any of the categories above, please contact an audiologist for a hearing evaluation.

Our Free Hearing Health Care Education Program is Now in Full Swing!

The purpose of this complimentary one-time class is to provide education and guidance on navigating the path to better hearing. We encourage all patients who have been diagnosed with any degree of hearing loss to attend.

You will gain a thorough understanding of the nature of hearing loss and learn how to maximize your hearing potential. All patients will benefit from this valuable information - those with minimal hearing loss as well as those with greater degrees of hearing loss who are candidates for hearing aid use.

We strongly recommend attending with the members of your household because people tend to struggle to communicate the most with their loved ones at home.

Here’s what our patients say...

“Since attending the hearing education class with my husband who wears hearing aids, I have become more knowledgeable about how to deal with hearing loss, which has helped to minimize stress for myself and my family. We now communicate more successfully at home and in other difficult environments, such as noisy restaurants. I left gaining so much to support my husband’s needs. I’m sure you’ll be surprised at all you take away.”

–M.B.

“The presentation was informative, straightforward and easy to understand. We found the diagram of the ear and the different situations to accomplish better hearing very practical. We are using the communication strategies discussed in our everyday lives. We even keep the handout and booklet on our refrigerator and coffee table as a reminder and for others to see.”

–G.C. and M.C.

Thank you for choosing Hearing Professionals of Illinois!
Providing you with an exceptional patient experience is our top priority. Please take a few minutes to tell us about your experience and provide feedback on our performance.

Call us today at (847) 674-5585 to reserve your seat at an upcoming class.

Visit us at: www.HearIllinois.com • Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter

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