

Hearing HealthCare News®

A newsletter for our patients, their families and friends

 Spring 2026

Your Healthy Hearing Check-up

Regular hearing health check-ups are an important part of good hearing health care. Your hearing check-up includes the following:

1. **Ear canal examination.** Earwax is one of the most common causes of hearing aid feedback (whistle) and hearing aid repairs.
2. **Hearing test.** Has your hearing changed? We'll compare the results to your previous hearing evaluation results. If we find a change in hearing, we'll recommend treatment or adjust your hearing aids to compensate for the change.
3. **Re-program your hearing aids.** Sometimes a re-programming of your hearing aids due to a change in hearing or a change in your hearing needs is helpful. You may find you hear better after this adjustment.
4. **Clean your hearing aids.** Regular cleaning minimizes hearing aid repairs and makes sure that your hearing aids are providing the maximum benefit.
5. **Review other sources of help.** This is a good time to ask about telephone amplifiers, clock and smoke alarms, devices for television and group settings and connectivity to cell phones and personal devices.

Your hearing deserves good care! Please call our office to schedule an appointment.

Hospital Noise Levels May Affect Health

The noise levels in many hospitals may affect patients' health.

Hospital noise can disturb patient sleep, affect blood pressure and interfere with patient recovery. Hospitals have something in common with restaurants: a common complaint is "too noisy."

Many hospitals have developed programs to control noise. Steps include the use of personal pagers, "quiet" periods and noise monitors. Medicare payment rates include patient ratings of quality of care. But for many hospitals—as in many restaurants—noise levels get the worst marks.

Myths About Hearing Loss

Hearing problems are rare. Hearing loss is actually quite common, affecting about 10% of the population, and is one of the most common chronic conditions in people over 50 years of age. Because it's invisible, someone with a hearing loss doesn't look any different—you walk by people with hearing loss every day and don't notice it (or their hearing aids).

Hearing loss is a sign of old age.

It's true that hearing loss is more common in the over-50 age group (but that's not old age!), but it also occurs in infants and children. Children almost always get early treatment, while



Thanks to early intervention, almost all children with hearing loss attend school in regular classrooms.

Making Life Easier

Hearing aids help adults succeed at work, maintain active social lives, and minimize the effects of hearing loss on mental health. Hearing aids make it possible for children with hearing loss to develop normal speech and language and attend regular classrooms.

"Hearing aids reduce the effort you need to hear and understand."

Yes, hearing aids help you to hear better. But hearing aids also allow you to hear with less effort.

Someone with hearing loss needs to concentrate to hear and understand, even in easy listening situations. This means using more energy and effort. This effort can make you mentally tired.

Hearing aids reduce that listening effort. Research has shown that many hearing aid users don't use any more listening effort than those with normal hearing. People who start using hearing aids simply "feel better" and "less tired."

Hearing better is the bottom line, of course. But the ability to hear with less stress and effort comes in a close second.

adults tend to postpone getting help for several years.

You can't test hearing in young children.

More than 95% of newborn babies have their hearing screened before they leave the hospital. An infant can't raise his or her hand of course: the test uses computer-generated sounds to measure the automatic reaction of the ear and auditory system.

Alexander Graham Bell invented the hearing aid.

Not exactly—he invented the telephone as a teaching device for deaf students. But many of the devices developed for the telephone were vital in the development of the first electrical hearing aids in the early 1900's.

Later developments eventually led hearing aids into the digital age. 21st century hearing aids are custom-fit to your individual hearing pattern, respond automatically to the sounds around you, amplify soft sounds but not loud sounds, distinguish between speech and noise and connect wirelessly to other devices such as your cell phone.

If people didn't mumble, I wouldn't have difficulty hearing.

For most people with hearing loss, the clarity of speech is more of a problem than loudness. Digital hearing aids help by amplifying sounds you don't hear, while not amplifying sounds you do hear.

WELCOME

...to the Spring issue of our patient newsletter. We hope you find the information useful to you and to your family.

Our practice is based on these fundamental principles:

- **Hearing loss is serious**
- **Hearing loss deserves professional care**
- **Hearing aids improve lives**

If You're Going to the Hospital...

A hospital stay is stressful for anyone. If you have a hearing loss, the normal stress of the hospital setting can be intensified by the communication difficulties caused by hearing loss.

Remember, hearing loss is an invisible condition and is often misunderstood. Doctors, nurses, aides, and other staff may not be aware of your hearing difficulties. Here are some steps you can take to ensure effective communication between you and your health care professionals:

➤ Be sure to tell the admissions office, the nursing station, and the nurses and aides around you that you have a hearing loss. Don't assume they know!

➤ Ask that the International Symbol for Hearing Impairment be placed on your chart, on your wristband, above your bed, and on your door, as a reminder to the hospital staff.

Take care . . . hearing aids have a tendency to get lost during hospital stays!

➤ If you have spare hearing aids, use them rather than your newer ones. Hearing aids have a tendency to get lost during hospital stays!

➤ Place your hearing aid(s) in a special container with your name on it for safekeeping when you're not using them.

➤ Ask for assistive listening devices for the television and telephone (or bring your own).

➤ Try using the built-in captioning available on the television set (usually accessible through the remote control).

➤ Always try to have someone else with you when you're talking with your doctors.

You and your family can be advocates, explaining to physicians, nurses and others how to make communication easier and more effective for someone with a hearing loss. Feel better!

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Good News



Oticon Zeal brings together everything you've been waiting for!

Your hearing is important to us! Our goal is to empower you to thrive in your communications, relationships, and well-being through better hearing. That's why we're excited to announce this ground-breaking hearing instrument.

Oticon Zeal is the world's most complete hearing instrument. It gives you:

- A discreet fit in your ear
- Amazing sound
- Connectivity
- Rechargeability
- Flexible fittings with same day option

Call us to schedule your hearing evaluation. And hear for yourself the difference that **Zeal** technology makes. Prepare to be impressed with its performance!

Sincerely,

Dr. Kristen A. Duncan Au.D.

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Duncan-Nulph Hearing Associates

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