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Special Offer Inside!

Sound Care's Animal Connection



Paco is 1 year old now but when Theresa first got him he was 6 weeks old and was so small he could fit in her pocket. He's a deer headed chihuahua. His best friend is Coco, her other chihuahua who is 5 and also a deer headed chihuahua.



Annual hearing tests and regular hearing aid check-ups every 3-6 months are recommended.

What's New?

Please welcome Theresa Perez to Sound Care Hearing Group! Theresa lives in Chicago with her daughter Leanna. She likes to cook Mexican food with her friends and family. Her specialties are flautas, mole, and tamales. Theresa has many years of experience working in health care and is eager to get to know everyone in the Sound Care family!



Dangerous Decibels and Exercise Classes

Are you committed to getting healthy this summer? Maybe two or three times a week, you enthusiastically attend Zumba and the resulting cardio workout makes you feel fantastic. But what if that class actually is detrimental to your hearing? In a ritual that plays out all over the country every day, millions of people don their workout gear and flock to their gym of choice for classes led by fitness instructors. With the rising popularity of fitness programs like Zumba, spinning, and BodyPump and Crossfit, loud, pounding music goes hand in hand with the sweat and rising heart rates. But studies have shown that participants in these classes are at a serious risk of damaging their hearing and the instructors are at an even bigger risk.

With the music cranked up, typical decibel levels for fitness classes can reach unsafe levels quickly. Researchers from George Mason University in Virginia found that spinning classes, though increasingly popular, are among the worst offenders with noise levels blaring anywhere from 100 to 110 decibels. That is somewhere between the decibel level of a chain saw and a jet

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Can Allergies Cause Hearing Loss?



Your eyes are itchy and your nose is runny – typical for allergy season, you say to yourself. But could your allergies also account for your diminished sense of hearing? Yes, say hearing health professionals, with symptoms that can include itching, swelling, vertigo and fullness in the ear.

Allergies and hearing loss

Your immune system responds to allergens by producing antibodies that release histamine. The release of histamine produces an allergic response; the resulting sneezing, itching and congestion also increases mucus production, which can cause conductive hearing loss.

Conductive hearing loss occurs when something, such as fluid or ear wax, prevents sound waves from flowing through the ear and into the tiny bones of the middle ear. Conductive hearing loss is curable, but it makes it temporarily difficult to hear.

Remember, it's never advisable to attempt to scratch an itch by putting anything inside your ear canal. Instead, wash your ear gently with a warm, wrung-out washcloth and dry it thoroughly. If that doesn't help, see your doctor. He or she will be able clean your ear and examine it to determine what is causing the itching.

Types of allergy-related hearing loss

Your ear has three major sections, all of which can be affected by allergies.

Outer ear: Allergic skin reactions can cause itching and swelling of both the outer ear and ear canal. Some individuals may be allergic to their laundry detergent, fragrance or earrings. Others may have allergies to household pets, especially dogs and cats.

Middle ear: If swelling blocks the opening to your middle ear, your Eustachian tube may not be able to drain properly. This can cause fluid and pressure to build up, giving you a feeling of fullness in the affected ear and providing a perfect breeding ground for bacteria and subsequent infection. This fluid buildup may also trigger balance problems, such as vertigo, giving you a feeling of being dizzy and light headed.

Inner ear: Allergies may also diminish hearing in individuals with inner ear disorders such as Meniere's disease.

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Dangerous Decibels and Exercise Classes

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engine. And typical decibel levels in aerobics or Zumba are well over 90 decibels. Even Crossfit, which is gaining popularity across the country, is not without its problems. The banging of weights, dropping of heavy objects and flipping of tires creates sounds with intense shock waves similar to explosions.

Though prolonged exposure to loud music is damaging to hearing, unfortunately most instructors think the louder music the greater the motivation. They think if the music isn't loud and exciting enough, people will go elsewhere for their workouts. And what happens when a gym decides to keep the music at a respectable volume? Sport & Health, a chain of fitness centers in Virginia, has trained their instructors to keep music levels around 90 decibels, and has lost some clients because of it. "They're not happy, and some of them have gone somewhere else," says Teri Bothwell, group fitness director in a Washington Post article. "At boutiques, it's a party and it's loud, and that's part of what people pay for." The answer might not only lie in the fitness clubs, but in the clients as well. The fitness clubs want to retain the business and the clients have convinced themselves that unless the music is pounding and loud, they are not getting a great workout.

The fact is that noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) is the leading cause of preventable hearing loss. Although you may eventually get used to the throbbing music in your Zumba class, your ears don't. The microscopic hair cells in the inner ear that transit sound to the brain become damaged and eventually die. And once they are lost, they don't regenerate.

Fitness instructors, those who spend most of their workday in music that batters the hearing, are most at risk of course. "It's the industry joke that we're all deaf by the time we're 35," says Bothwell. While the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) sets regulations for fitness center employees regarding decibel levels and exposure times, the truth is that most fitness centers and instructors fail to follow the guidelines. And legal obligations only extend to the employees; the clients of the fitness center are offered no such protection.

So how do you know music in your gym is too loud? The simple answer is that if you have to ask, it probably is. And if you have to shout to be heard, that's a red flag. There are also apps you can get on your phone that will read decibel level to ensure that the music in your class is at a safe volume. Here are some basic steps you can take to protect yourself from hearing loss while using a fitness center:

- **Before joining a gym, test it out a few times to assess the noise level, to make sure it is at an acceptable volume.**
- **Be an advocate for healthy hearing. Speak to the instructor, the head of fitness classes and the gym manager about noise level if you feel it is too much.**
- **Get your hearing tested, especially if you have experienced ringing or fullness in your ears for more than 24 hours.**
- **During exercise classes take precautions like wearing earplugs and positioning yourself as far away from the speakers as possible.**
- **Rest your ears in between exposure to loud noises**

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Can Allergies Cause Hearing Loss? *Continued...*

Allergy and hearing aids

In addition to causing you some discomfort, allergens can also clog the microphone ports in your hearing aids, affecting the way your hearing aids function. You can replace the covers of microphone ports easily. Of course, regular cleaning of your hearing aid is always advisable, especially during allergy season.

Some individuals seem to experience an allergic reaction to their hearing aids. If this is the case, be sure to talk to your hearing health professional. The allergy may be caused by poor fit, moisture in the ear, wax accumulation, dry skin or an allergy to the earmold material.

The good news

Most of the time, any hearing loss you experience during allergy season is typically temporary. Normal hearing usually returns after your symptoms subside or your infection clears. If they don't — or you experience extreme pain and discomfort — see your audiologist to make sure your condition doesn't need long-term treatment.

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About Sound Care Hearing Group

Have you had a good experience with the Doctors at Sound Care Hearing Group? Yelp all about it, and receive a free package of batteries!

<http://www.yelp.com/biz/sound-care-hearing-group-oak-park>



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From Our Kitchen to Yours Pasta Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 ounce) package fusilli (spiral) pasta
- 3 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 pound provolone cheese, cubed
- 1/2 pound salami, cubed
- 1/4 pound sliced pepperoni, cut in half
- 1 large green bell pepper, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 (10 ounce) can black olives, drained
- 1 (4 ounce) jar pimentos, drained
- 1 (8 ounce) bottle Italian salad dressing



Directions:

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente. Drain, and rinse with cold water. In a large bowl, combine pasta with tomatoes, cheese, salami, pepperoni, green pepper, olives, and pimentos. Pour in salad dressing, and toss to coat.

We have enjoyed this pasta salad recipe. Try adding in fresh mushrooms as well!



Dr. Rebecca L. Anderson
Owner/Audiologist

Hours:

Monday-Tuesday: 9:00 - 6:00

Wednesday: 9:00 - 1:00

Thursday: 9:00 - 6:00

Friday: 9:00 - 1:00

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"The Doctors of Audiology at Sound Care Hearing Group Can Help!"