



Winter

Special points of interest:

- Solving the Restaurant Dilemma
- Brain Health and Hearing
- Aural Rehabilitation
- Upcoming Events

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How to Solve the Restaurant Dilemma

The ability to hear conversations in noise is the number-one request of people seeking help for hearing difficulties. The vast majority of those people identify restaurants as the most challenging.

Multiple speakers and distracting background noise make it difficult, if not impossible to keep up with the conversation in a noisy restaurant when you have hearing loss. It's called the 'restaurant dilemma' and it can keep you from enjoying good times with family and friends.

Leading hearing aid manufacturer Oticon, Inc. recently conducted a study of noise in 50 popular restaurants in 10 leading foodie cities, during peak dining times.

Detroit Metro area was one of the 10 cities.

Not surprisingly, noise levels at the in-demand restaurants registered on average at or above the 80-decibel range - about the noise level of a diesel train passing by at 45 mph.

If you already experience hearing loss, just the thought of sitting through a meal at those noise levels may be enough for you to stay home. But there are things you can do to overcome the restaurant dilemma and enjoy a meal out with family and friends.

Request an Early Reservation

At lively social gatherings, noise tends to rise as the party continues. The same is true for restaurants. An early start time helps to put you ahead of the building wave of sound.

Pick a Quiet Spot - Select a restaurant with a good hearing environment. Look for details that minimize background noise such as carpeting, cork or acoustic ceiling tiles, curtains, tablecloths, seat cushions and other noise-absorbing features. Request a corner table, booth or a quiet spot away from the kitchen.

Take the Best Seat at the Table

Choose a seat that lets you see as many faces as possible. That way, you'll be able to see their lips while people are speaking. Opt for brighter lighting that lets you more easily pick up visual cues.

Speak Up About Your Hearing Loss

Tell your dinner companions or your server that you have a hearing loss and noisy situations can be difficult for you. If music is preventing you from enjoying your dining experience, request a table away from the speakers or music source.

Hearing, Eyesight, and Cognition

Previous research suggested that hearing loss and abnormalities in the eye are tied to memory loss and a higher Alzheimer's risk. New evidence now indicates that addressing hearing and sight problems can slow down cognitive decline. Existing studies have pointed out that there is a link between the quality of a person's hearing and their eye health and their exposure to cognitive decline.

For instance, one such study covered on *Medical News Today* suggested that poor hearing may correlate with a poor memory. Now, two new papers each based on studies conducted by the same scientists from the UK's

University of Manchester look at the evidence indicating that treating hearing loss and eyesight problems can slow down the development of cognitive decline. Research published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, has reported similar findings about people who wear hearing aids.

Dr. Asri Maharani remarks, "We find that hearing and vision interventions may slow it [cognitive decline] down and perhaps prevent some cases of dementia, which is exciting, though we can't say yet that this is a causal relationship."

New Year Resolutions

- ☒ Check Vision
- ☒ Check Hearing



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...your ability to determine the location of sounds is compromised. The amplification from hearing aids helps compensate for the vision loss.



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hearing loss
may help
more than just*



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Four Ways Hearing Loss Affects Brain Health

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1) Hearing loss leads to social isolation

Untreated hearing loss has long been linked to increased social isolation and loneliness, which studies have shown are well-established risk factors for Alzheimer's and dementia.

2) Hearing loss shifts your cognitive load

Imagine your brain has a finite amount of fuel. As hearing becomes more difficult, you use more "fuel" to comprehend what you're listening to — meaning you have less for memory and decision-making. Scientists refer to it as the "cognitive load theory."

3) Hearing loss accelerates brain shrinkage

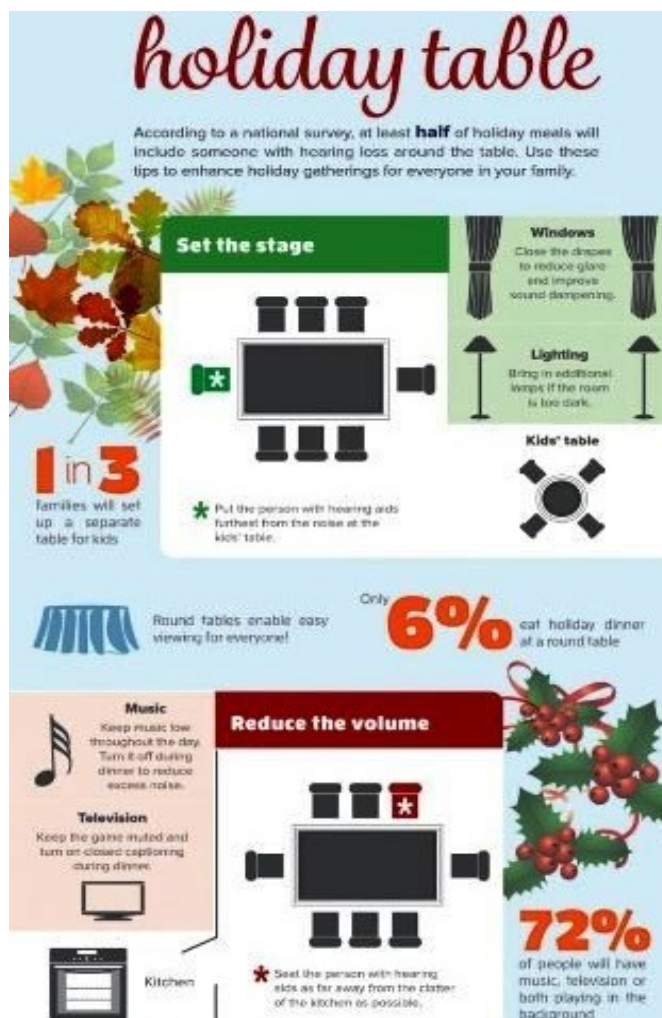
Believe it or not — our brains shrink as we age. But MRIs of people with hearing loss show the brain "shrinks" faster than normal, likely due to lack of stimulation.

4) Treating hearing loss can help reduce the risk of cognitive decline and dementia

Two studies — in 2015 and 2017 — determined that treating hearing loss (with hearing aids) can reduce the risk of cognitive decline associated with hearing loss and can help prevent dementia. The benefits of wearing hearing aids may also include:

- Reduced mental fatigue
- Decreased feelings of isolation and depression
- Improved ability to do several things at once
- Improved memory, attention and focus
- Improved communication skills.

Hearing Friendly Holiday Dinner



Ready or not, here they come!

Whether you're hosting a family event or attending one, planning for the season can help make things much less stressful.

If you're hosting the gathering, take a few moments to consider who is coming. Give those who have trouble hearing a comfortable place to have one-on-one conversations.

Reduce or eliminate background noise during the meal. If you can't designate a separate room for the big game, at least turn the television off during dinner. Turn down (or off) the background music while you eat. Wait until your guests have left the table before clearing the dishes. Which seat at the table is farthest from the kitchen? The person wearing the hearing aids may want to sit there.

Most of all, enjoy!

Improve Your Hearing Comprehension with Hearing Aids and Aural Rehabilitation

There is a growing body of evidence showing the benefits of using auditory training in the hearing aid fitting process. Once you have hearing aids, aural rehabilitation is a great way to accelerate your progress. Auditory Training is a specialized type of training that's designed to help reduce the effort needed to listen and understand when people are speaking to you. Basically, it teaches your brain to start hearing better again. Think of it as exercise for your ears. Aural Rehabilitation is an important component of the hearing aid fitting process.

When you haven't heard the full range of sounds for a while, the parts of your brain that are used to processing those sounds atrophy just like a muscle that becomes weaker when it hasn't been used. Aural rehab exercises those parts of the brain to help you understand what you hear again.

You will enjoy many positive outcomes, such as better speech discrimination and reduced effort to recognize speech when you hear it. Even a few minutes a session can help improve your ability to understand. Many of the programs use games to develop your cognitive skills and enhance your ability to understand speech. So what are you waiting for? Get started today!

There are many phone APPs and downloadable

programs available. Here are a few training programs that you can do at home:

Angel Sound: A PC-based, self-paced, interactive auditory training and assessment program. Also available for the iPhone/iPad in the Apple App store

Listen: A free iPhone only based APP

HearCoach: A free APP produced by Starkey

cLEAR: A subscription-based program that includes online training exercises and professional coaching.

LACE: A web application that allows you to train from any device with an internet connection.

Posit Science's BrainHQ: A program for enhancing brain function by improving accuracy and speed with a focus on auditory reception.

Fun Facts

Sitting close to loudspeakers at concerts (which can reach about 120 decibels) can damage your hearing in just 7.5 minutes!

The outer ear never stops growing throughout one's lifetime.

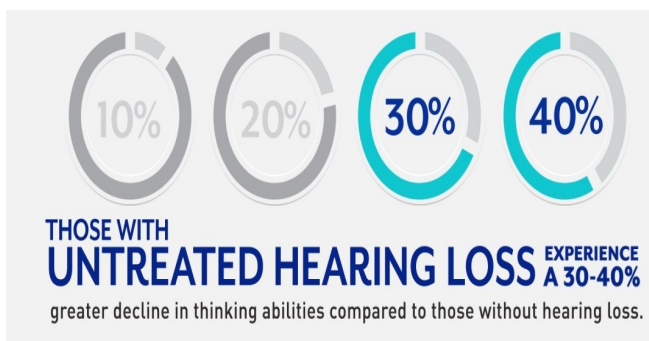
The middle ear is about the size of an M&M.

The inner ear is no larger than a pencil eraser in circumference.

The eardrum moves less than a billionth of an inch in response to sound.

In World War I parrots were kept on the Eiffel Tower in Paris because of their remarkable sense of hearing. When the parrots heard enemy aircraft, they warned everyone of the approaching danger long before any human ear would hear it.

DID YOU KNOW?



A study which focused on the link between hearing aids and cognitive decline rates was based on the Health and Retirement Study of the Health Institute on Aging in 1996–2014 where researchers worked with 2,040 participants. **For those who adopted hearing aids, the scientists found the rate of cognitive decline was 75 percent slower following this intervention.**

Dr. Piers Dawes, involved in the studies, surmises *"It's not really certain why hearing and visual problems have an impact on cognitive decline, but I'd guess that isolation, stigma, and the resultant lack of physical activity that are linked to hearing and vision problems."* He also noted the fact that hearing aids may become more attractive due to the fact that hearing aids are now developing to have more than one function. **"Wearable hearing devices are coming on stream nowadays which might also be helpful. They not only assist your hearing, but give you access to the Internet and other services." Call us to Hear this New Technology Personalized for You!**



**Hearing Aid
Induction Loop Area**

The hearing loop is a wire that circles a room, and is connected to the sound system. The "loop" transmits the sound electromagnetically which is picked up by the telecoil in the hearing aid.

The Hearing Clinic



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In the last week or so, vast portions of our beautiful state have been covered by the soft white blanket, otherwise known as winter. Being outside after a snowstorm, making a path one shovel full of snow at a time, can be a time for quiet contemplation. And then it hits you—why is it so quiet? Indeed, why is it so quiet? Through some observation and some deduction, a case for the quiet can be made. Let's start with the easiest:

There are fewer people, vehicles, and animals out. The more seldom the sources of sound, the quieter the environment. *But it only gets interesting from there...*

Fresh snow is soft and absorptive. While the direct sound travels to your ear, the weaker reflections off buildings, trees, and other objects, get absorbed more quickly. What

you are left with is one direct path and few or no reflections. It is a reverberation-free environment, *almost*.

The same snow, melted by the sun the day after, and refrozen by the dark cold of the night creates a very different acoustic environment. What was absorptive becomes reflective. What was clear and direct becomes reverberant and complex as many iterations of the same source reach you after bouncing off the hardened ice on the ground.

Now to the greatest of all effects. The speed of sound in gases is directly proportional to the square root of the temperature. Under normal

circumstances, temperature decreases as you move from near the surface of the earth upwards. Thus, sound travels the fastest near the ground and ever more slowly as you move upwards away from the ground. The net effect is that sound essentially bends upwards under these circumstances. With snow or ice on the ground, this temperature to height relationship is often inverted. That is, temperatures are coolest near the ground and rise with increasing height. A phenomenon is known as temperature inversion. Under conditions of inversion, the speed of sound is slowest near the ground and increases with increasing distance from the ground. The net effect is that sound bends downwards under conditions of inversion. This downward refraction of

of sound has the effect of making distant objects sound as if they were even closer. This is the strongest reason for soundscapes to be altered in perception when there is snow on the ground, and it is cold outside. **Sound is pretty cool!**

**LET IT SNOW,
LET IT SNOW,
LET IT SNOW !**

