

Sound BYTES

INFORMATION FOR YOUR EARS



ASK THE EXPERT: FULL TIME HEARING



It is very important to wear your hearing aids full time. Many patients report that they only wear their hearing aids in challenging listening situations or “when they have to”. Patients who infrequently wear their hearing aids find themselves struggling to sort through the noise and speech, in these difficult situations, because they have not learned how to listen through their hearing aids in quiet. In general, the hearing aid users that receive the most benefit from their hearing aids are the people that wear them full-time.

WHY DO I NEED TO USE MY HEARING AIDS IN PLACES THAT I CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT THEM?

Hearing is like exercise, the more you use your hearing the better it becomes. Wearing your hearing aids consistently, will continue to stimulate your ears and your brain, retraining your brain and making it easier to hear and to listen. Hearing loss comes on very gradually over a period of years depriving us from speech and environmental sounds. When hearing aids are first used all the sounds in the environment, such as

“Do I need to wear my hearing aids all day?”

plates clanking, water running, and papers shuffling, are amplified and heard, which can be overwhelming. Wearing hearing aids full time during the day will help to train your brain to adjust to these sounds making these sounds eventually seem more natural and give you the ability to filter out surrounding sounds making it easier to focus on what you want to hear.

When you use your hearing aids “full time” surrounding sounds and speech become more natural which makes them more comfortable and easier to understand. If you only wear hearing aids for difficult listening environments, such as TV, group situations, restaurants, etc., it is like starting over each time. Infrequent use of hearing aids makes it difficult to train your brain to ignore the sounds of the world and focus on the speech you want to hear. Over time, training your brain to listen will make it easier to hear and understand speech in complex listening environment. Keeping your hearing in good shape by wearing hearing aids full time improves your listening, focusing, and understanding.

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TIPS



HOME HEARING HEALTH

WHETHER IT'S A SMALL ADJUSTMENT TO YOUR TELEVISION OR A REVISION IN YOUR MORNING ROUTINE, THESE SMALL HELPFUL TIPS CAN MAKE A BIG IMPACT IN YOUR LIFE.



WHY IS THE TV SO HARD TO HEAR?

Flat screen TV's have smaller speakers that are typically not positioned to deliver the sound directly ahead. Also, the balance between the bass and treble may not be adjusted to best meet your needs.

If you have high frequency hearing loss, you may want to boost the treble under your TV settings to improve the clarity.

A sound bar or surround sound can help to deliver a better quality audio signal.

Many hearing aids also have accessories specifically designed to send the TV signal directly to your hearing aids.

If you are not a hearing aid wearer, there are many wireless headset options that allow you to adjust the volume to your preferred listening level.

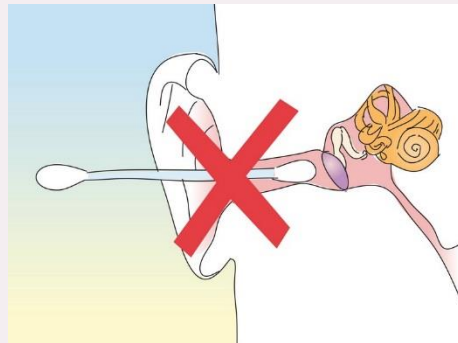
TIPS ON Q-TIPS

Have you ever heard the saying, "Don't put anything smaller than your elbow in your ear?" Well, it turns out your mother wasn't just trying to scare you. The problem with Q-tips is that they are not designed for the ear canal, so they actually push the wax deeper into the ear canal rather than pulling it out.

This often leaves the ear canal red, sore, and irritated. Cerumen or earwax, is actually beneficial for many reasons.

It keeps dirt and dust out of your ear canals, moisturizes the canal, and helps fight off infections. The reason why you don't need to worry about removing it is because as you chew your food or talk with your friends, you are pushing the wax out of your ears naturally. If earwax is pushed too far down the canal with a Q-tip, the ear

canal is no longer able to push it out naturally. Another painful problem with using Q-tips is the possibility of rupturing the eardrum. This can occur by accidentally hitting the eardrum with the Q-tip or pushing the earwax into the eardrum. Ouch!



A safe alternative to cleaning your ears is to let water from the shower gently run into your ear canals. If that doesn't satisfy the feeling of using a Q-tip, take a clean cloth and wipe the outside, or bowl, of your ear without going into the ear canal.

There are some people who produce an excessive amount of earwax and these people should see their primary care physician or Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician to have it safely removed.