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Summer Hours (until Labor Day) Mon-Thurs 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Fri 8 - 3



Ask Your Audiologist

Q. *My friend recently told me she had a borderline hearing loss. Is that a real type of hearing loss or was she just making that up? You know, she has a tendency to tell the most unbelievable stories. She once told me about a dog eating a hearing aid and I don't believe that for a minute.*

A. Well aren't you the chatty one? Borderline hearing loss. On the fence. In the gray area. Marginal. Skinny. Slight. These are all nontechnical terms used to describe a small, but very real, hearing loss. A slight hearing loss does not greatly limit daily function. That person will not miss out on conversation at close distance and generally won't have the TV volume increased. They do well on the phone. They have difficulty with certain voices (anyone know a "mumbler"?) and in certain situations (busy restaurants - like most of us). Do we recommend hearing aids for the borderline hearing loss? Sometimes yes. Sometimes no. The decision gets down to how the loss affects the person.

Like so many things in life, different folks react to things in different ways. And we all spend our time differently. Here are a couple of examples. Bobbie Jo spends her days very actively with friends, in meetings, or out to dinner and she really doesn't want to miss any of the juicy gossip. BJ is probably going to fall over the fence and want hearing aids sooner than a lot of others. Now consider Jim Bob. He's not much of a social gad about. He likes to work in his shop and yard. He reads. JB actually likes to talk to his wife (who does not mumble). He plays cards with the guys twice a month and usually wins. Odds are JB doesn't even realize he has a hearing loss. He never did care much about gossip. JB is a case for monitoring only and no hearing aid recommendation. BJ and JB are polar opposites. Most decisions aren't so easy. Yet, some careful consideration of daily situations and how much frustration they cause usually leads to a good decision. Sometimes a cloudy situation can be cleared up through the use of a trial period with amplification. People can actually experience the benefit in the situations that are most important to them every day. If the hearing aids don't make a positive difference they are returned to the manufacturer. While all of our hearing aids have a trial period, we don't nudge people to try hearing aids if they are really stuck on that fence post. FYI, our hearing aid returns are less than 1% of all fittings. And by the way, dogs really do eat hearing aids.



Are you wearing a HALO?

In the spring newsletter we announced we were beginning to offer hearing aids made by Starkey. They have now released their made for iPhone hearing aid, Halo. The “techy” among you are going to be really excited about this instrument. Here is a brief summary of the features:

- Best is first - your iPhone automatically sends phone calls (or music) to both ears without you having to fuss with where to hold it or wearing a neck loop accessory.
- Halo can be controlled by your iPhone 5, iPad 4 or iPod touch 5th generation or newer.
- Your iPhone can change your hearing aid volume and memory settings

- Your iPhone shows remaining battery life in your hearing aids
- Your iPhone can find your misplaced hearing aids!
- Halo turns down road noise when your car speed exceeds 10 mph
- You can create your own custom settings in difficult situations. Your iPhone can then store those settings for future use

Halo is available as a very cosmetically pleasing behind the ear device that delivers sound to your ear through a very thin cord (RIC style). Prices vary, depending on which processor is in the hearing aid, from \$1850 - \$2850 each (you provide the iPhone of course). We have brochures and would be happy to talk to you about Halo. These are obviously not for everyone but if you are that “techy” person, they are going to make you very happy!

MY DEAR... YOU
HAVE A BEAN IN
YOUR EAR!



Introducing **The Bean Quiet Sound Amplifier** by Etymotic Research. The Bean is an over the counter product intended to help you hear life's little sounds. It can help with a soft voice, a TV that's not quite loud enough or the distant voice in church. Sound like a hearing aid? Well, it's a lot like a hearing aid. The big difference is it is not very strong and can not be reprogrammed. Think of it like reading glasses. It is intended for those with small hearing losses who are perhaps “on the fence” for a hearing aid (Did you read article on page 1?) Or those who have good hearing and want to hear very quiet sounds like that cute little grandchild of yours. The Bean has several size ear tips that fit most ears. We have a demo unit in the office that you can try. Cost: \$400/each or \$750/pair. Free money back trial period from us. 1 year warranty from Etymotic.

Sounds of Summer



THAT YOU DON'T
WANT TO HEAR!

Some sounds are too loud even without your hearing aids. In fact, many of you now need your hearing aids because of previous exposure to loud sound. Summer brings noise from tractors, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, outdoor concerts, fireworks ... the list goes on. Your hearing aids are not hearing protectors. There are times when it is safer to remove them and wear ear plugs or muffs. For example, if you are spending a couple of hours cutting the back 40 with your tractor you should really protect your ears. It is possible to cause further damage to hearing or tinnitus (ringing in the ears). I have both hearing loss and constant tinnitus that sounds something like crickets or an electrical power line. (Isn't it great to have an audiologist that has to put up with all the same nasty problems that you experience?) There have been times that I didn't wear ear plugs at a concert and my tinnitus was much louder for days. Now, if I don't have plugs, I leave.

You can buy inexpensive (like half a buck) disposable plugs at the pharmacy, sporting goods store or our office. We'll give you your first pair FREE! Ear muffs are available at sporting stores or tool stores. We have reusable plugs that are wonderful for music (ETY plugs come in 2 sizes and cost \$12). The music plugs are ideal for concerts or young people playing in the band. Think about protecting your kids and grand kids too. We also make custom ear plugs for noise and music.

RECYCLED HEARING AIDS



Many of our patients have donated hearing aids that they did not need in order to help others. In response, we established a program to share those hearing aids locally. We make the behind the ear hearing aids that are in excellent condition available to adults with limited financial resources. Other hearing aids are sent to Hear Now, a national organization that helps those with financial need. Do you have a family member or friend who needs help with their hearing but can't afford hearing aids? Please have them contact us about our Recycled Hearing Aid program. Those with income between 100-200% of the federal poverty level contribute to the process. We ask them to pay for a hearing test and ear mold. There is no charge for the hearing aid, fitting, programming or 3 follow up visits. Additional follow up visits are \$10 each. Fees are waived for those with income less than the federal poverty level.

HEARING SERVICES & SYSTEMS

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