

# Hearing Aids

## Fact Sheet

### The Parts of a Hearing Aid

A hearing aid is a medical device which is designed to amplify sounds and is fitted for the hearing impaired. The hearing aid is composed of parts which are required for the hearing aid to function. An impression of your ear is required so the device fits you properly.

The body or shell of the hearing aid is the part which fits into your ear. The outer shell of the hearing aid contains the microphone which picks up the sound to be amplified. The volume control is a dial which is used to either increase or decrease the degree to which the sound is amplified.

Contained within the shell of the hearing aid is the circuitry designed to amplify the sound arriving from the microphone. Once the sound is amplified it is picked up by the receiver. The receiver is located at the part of the shell which ends in your ear canal. The hearing aid runs on battery power. Because the hearing aid circuitry requires much power to amplify sounds, a battery has to be replaced approximately every 10 to 14 days. The hearing aid requires additional regular maintenance to keep it in good working order.

### Daily Check List for Hearing Aid Users

- ~ Check battery by turning the hearing aid on full and cup in palm the of your hand to produce feedback or squeal. Check the tiny holes (the sound channels) on the canal tip to be sure they are not plugged with wax or dry skin. Gently clean with the brush or wax loop. Replace battery if no feedback present. The battery should last 10 to 14 days.
- ~ Check ear canal portion of the aid for wax. Remove it gently if present.
- ~ Check for dirt on volume control or microphone. Clean gently with dry brush. Do not use any form of liquid to clean.
- ~ If you are unable to manage your hearing aid by yourself, nursing staff, a family member, or a caregiver should periodically check to make certain your aid is turned on, and inserted correctly, and in proper working order.
- ~ When you are not using your hearing aid ensure it is turned off and remove the battery to prevent battery leak and corrosion.
- ~ Dispose of expired batteries carefully and properly. They are toxic if swallowed.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### ~ Should I get a hearing aid?

Have your friends or family been suggesting that this would be a good idea? Do you feel that people are mumbling? Before you purchase any hearing aid, see a qualified audiologist. Your audiologist will test your hearing and make the appropriate recommendations. If you are a hearing aid candidate, your audiologist will guide you through the selection process.

### ~ I have been told that hearing aids will not help nerve deafness. Is this true?

Medical intervention usually does not cure nerve deafness but in most cases it can be helped through properly fitted amplification. A hearing test done by a qualified audiologist will help identify what type of hearing loss you have.

### ~ Do I need two hearing aids?

People hear better with two ears than with one. Binaural hearing improves your ability to understand speech in noise and helps you to locate the sounds around you.

### ~ Can I get hearing aids that filter out background noise?

Understanding of speech, especially in noisy environments, will vary depending upon your degree of hearing loss, how well the hearing aids have been fitted, how frequently the hearing aids are used, and the signal-to-noise ratio present in the environment. Many recent developments in hearing aid design help you to cope with adverse listening situations.

### ~ Will I have to let my hair grow long to cover two large hearing aids in my ears?

In recent years, hearing aids have become smaller and more cosmetically appealing. Your audiologist can review the style choices appropriate for your hearing loss and personal preferences.

### ~ Will hearing aids restore my hearing to normal?

Hearing aids are designed to aid hearing but they cannot restore hearing. They are only a part of the hearing rehabilitation process. Your audiologist will help you with all aspects of your journey towards better hearing.



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~ **Are hearing aids too expensive for me?**

Your hearing aids could be the best investment you make for yourself. Good communication is fundamental to all our personal relationships. The variety of hearing instruments available makes it very likely that you will be able to find good amplification in a comfortable price range.

~ **What is a telephone coil?**

Often, as a hearing aid wearer, when you place a telephone receiver to your ear your hearing aid makes an unpleasant whistling noise. A telecoil option, added to your hearing aid, uses the electromagnetic energy produced by the telephone and eliminates the annoying feedback. The hearing aid will have a switch allowing you to choose between the standard microphone mode and telephone compatible mode. Ask your audiologist to explain the features of your hearing aid to you.

~ **Do I have to wear my hearing aids all the time?**

You haven't heard well for a long time and you have adapted to imperfect hearing. You have to relearn what "normal hearing" is and one of the best ways to achieve this is to wear the hearing aids as much as possible, as consistently as possible during waking hours. You may have to increase wearing time gradually in the beginning but full time use is the ultimate goal. Your audiologist will help you to accomplish this.

~ **How do I care for my hearing aids?**

Very little care is required. You must keep the hearing aids clean and dry. Every 10 to 14 day fresh batteries must be inserted. Your audiologist will show you how to do these things when you get the hearing aids for the first time and you will be given a booklet of instructions to take home with you.