

ARE YOU
worried about
HEARING
LOSS?



Hearing & Audiology

Risk Factors for Hearing Loss

Your ears are incredibly effective but delicate sensory organs. They are susceptible to damage from, among other things, chronic diseases, medications and trauma. Recent studies have shown how closely linked hearing loss is to many different medical conditions. You are at increased risk of hearing loss if any of the following apply to you:

- ▶ Age – 29% of Australians aged 51-60 years have a hearing loss, rising to 66% in those over 60
- ▶ Diabetes can double your risk of hearing loss
- ▶ Obesity can double your risk of hearing loss
- ▶ Smoking, including being exposed to second hand smoke, can double your risk of hearing loss
- ▶ Cardiovascular disease, including hypertension, can increase your risk of hearing loss.
- ▶ Usage of certain medications, including aspirin, ibuprofen, some antibiotics, diuretics and chemotherapy drugs can cause hearing loss
- ▶ Balance issues, including dizziness
- ▶ Ringing in your ears, called tinnitus
- ▶ Exposure to high noise levels
- ▶ Head injuries
- ▶ Family history of hearing loss
- ▶ History of ear infections or ear surgery

Complications of hearing loss

Your ears are used to collect the sounds around you, while understanding what you hear happens in the brain. When your ears aren't collecting sounds as well as they used to your brain can compensate but it has to work very hard to fill in the gaps. This can lead to several serious complications, including:

- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Social withdrawal and isolation
- ▶ Difficulties in your job
- ▶ Difficulties understanding and following important medical advice
- ▶ Mental exhaustion due to the effort required to understand other people
- ▶ Increased risk of dementia
- ▶ Triple the risk of having a fall

Signs you should see an audiologist

Audiologists are hearing specialists who assess and diagnose hearing loss, as well as recommend individualised management and rehabilitation plans. They can also give advice on how you can protect and preserve your hearing. If you have any of the following signs or are worried about your hearing you should see an audiologist:

- ▶ Difficulty picking out words in background noise
- ▶ Speaking loudly and having difficulty understanding and responding to people

- ▶ Feeling like you have to concentrate to understand other people
- ▶ Having a history of falls or having problems with balance or dizziness
- ▶ Having depression, worry or anxiety, especially related to socialising
- ▶ Buzzing or ringing in your ears
- ▶ Having a history of exposure to loud noises
- ▶ Feeling like everybody, especially women and children, mumble
- ▶ Having one or more of the risk factors for hearing loss

How to protect and improve your hearing

It is important to consider your hearing not only when you are concerned about a hearing loss but also before a noticeable hearing loss happens. Audiologists can help assess what may put your hearing at risk and recommend ways of minimising those risks, including creating customised ear plugs and discussing methods to improve your hearing and communication skills. If you require hearing aids it is important that you are fitted in order to minimize any complications of hearing loss. The good news is hearing aids have never been more discrete or effective.



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www.hearingandaudiology.com.au

Why Hearing & Audiology?

We are the oldest private audiology practice in Western Australia with over 30 years' experience in providing high quality hearing services to the community. As an independently owned family business we pride ourselves on offering the best advice and services to our customers and believe in treating every client as an individual. We understand the impact of hearing on quality of life and are committed to being there for clients in every stage of the hearing journey, from prevention to diagnosis, through to rehabilitation and re-adjustment to hearing when hearing aids are fitted.

All our clinicians are university educated and stay up to date on the latest developments in hearing research and technology. We provide all your hearing needs in one place, including all the latest in hearing aid technology, tinnitus treatments and custom noise, swim and musicians' ear plugs, all with a friendly expert who puts your unique needs first.



What should you do next?

Call us and book a hearing assessment.

If you are an Australian Pensioner you may qualify for **free hearing services**. To find out if you can access free hearing services simply **Freecall 1800 888 196** with your Australian Pensioner card handy and we can check your eligibility and register you straight away.

If you are being treated by your GP on a complex care plan you are eligible for a Medicare rebate on a hearing assessment.

If you have private health insurance you can phone your provider and ask them if you are eligible for any rebates.



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