

Hints from the Heart



Living Well With Hearing Loss

Whether your intention is to enjoy your grandchildren more or hear better at meetings, there are options for coping with changes to your hearing ability and **living well with hearing loss**. Hearing loss can impact relationships at home, work, and in social situations. It does not only affect the person with the loss, but also the people they interact with on a regular basis.

As researchers and hearing health care professionals seek the treatments and technologies to help hearing loss, people every day are finding ways to adjust and improve the quality of their lives in the presence of hearing loss. Some of these ways are:

Hearing Aids:

The availability of medical and technological options today allows for many choices to improve communication. Manufacturers have developed sleek, cosmetically attractive instruments to appeal to young seniors with options such as Blue tooth compatibility, programming for multiple environments, vibrant stylish colors and shapes, and automatic signal processing.



Rehabilitation Treatment:

Although technology can often provide significant benefits for people with hearing loss, hearing rehabilitation treatment, is available for those who may want to maximize their communication through speech reading and listening skills. Some individuals partake in group or individual training programs or a variety of computer based, at-home training programs. Some are designed to help improve understanding in adverse listening conditions, while others focus on the visual characteristics of speech for lip-reading training. For further information about these programs, contact your hearing health care professional.

Support Groups:

Many people seek advice and comfort from others with the same problems. There are many wonderful organizations that provide support and information for millions of people with hearing loss. The *Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* and the *Hearing Loss Association of America* are just two national consumer organizations with local chapters. Meetings, organized chat rooms, local chapters, and conventions all provide information, support, and advocacy for issues relevant to people with hearing loss.

For more information about hearing loss, go to www.drf.org (Deafness Research Foundation).

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