

HEARING AIDS

£4.99

Britain's 1st dedicated consumer guide to Hearing Aids

Hearing aid styles

The hearing test and how we hear

Bluetooth connectivity

Everything you need to know

Avoiding hearing loss

Boost your hearing with rechargeable hearing aids

And much more...

PLUS: All your questions answered and product information on the very latest hearing aid technology



THE 2020 ESSENTIAL GUIDE



Better hearing starts here



Welcome to The Essential Guide to Hearing Aids 2020 - one of Britain's best guides to hearing loss and hearing aids. In this issue you will find all the essential information you need to know when considering how to go about improving your hearing.

As a GP I am all too aware of how common hearing loss is across all age groups. With 10 million people in the UK currently experiencing hearing loss and as many as 4 million of them still undiagnosed and reluctant to seek help, it is a hugely neglected condition crying out for attention.

Early detection with single, quick diagnostic testing and huge advances in sophisticated, almost invisible modern hearing aid technology means that remedies for all severities of hearing loss are readily available, cosmetically acceptable and perhaps most importantly of all, dramatically effective.

I therefore recommend that everybody over the age of fifty has their hearing checked each year, as is common with having a sight test, or indeed visiting the dentist.

I hope you enjoy reading the Essential Guide to Hearing Aids.

Dr Hillary Jones

Use the form below to make a note of the date and time of your hearing test. It will be provided FREE and without obligation.

	Hearing Test Details		
	Day:	Date:	Time:
	At:		
	Town:		
	Telephone:		

Contents

Hearing Loss - The Facts

- People Urged to Get Their Hearing Checked
 - Hearing Facts & Figures
 - Signs of Hearing Loss
- Your Hearing Assessment
- How We Hear
- Types of Hearing Loss

4-9

A Background to Hearing

- Preventing Hearing Loss
 - Tinnitus - The Facts
 - Wax Information

10-11

The Benefit of Hearing Aids

- Binaural Hearing
- Styles of Hearing Aids

12-15

Product Update

Technical information on the latest hearing aids

- Oticon Opn Hearing Aid
- Connectivity
- Rechargeable hearing aids
- Spectacle Aids
- Starkey Hearing Aids
- Widex Hearing Aids

16-22

16-17

18

19

20

21

22

Final Word

- Talking Point

23



People urged to get their hearing checked

Recognising a hearing loss is the first step to improving your life. The Essential Guide helps you do just that.

“Hearing aids have a significantly positive impact on relationships at home and effective communication”

Hearing loss can lead to feelings of frustration, isolation and even depression, but not knowing where to go for help can be daunting and might leave you feeling even more confused and overwhelmed.

Losing your hearing or witnessing it in a loved one is stressful enough - finding the best solution for you shouldn't be. Don't let this daunting task stand between you and enjoying a richer, fuller life. Very quickly, you can start enjoying all of the wonderful sounds life has to offer.

The first step in rediscovering clearer hearing is to get your

hearing tested. There are two routes you can take to seek help. You could visit your local GP who will refer you to your local Audiology department, or, seek private help from your local private hearing healthcare provider.

A hearing test with the NHS or a Private healthcare provider should be free and whichever route you choose to take, you will be seen by a regulated professional. You can be confident if choosing either route that the professional conducting the hearing test will have the necessary training, qualification and expertise to carry out the hearing test and provide the assistance you require.

What is the best route to take? The main differences between going private and the NHS are choice, waiting times, time for service and cost. NHS waiting times vary across the UK with some people reporting having to wait months before being seen, whereas with private hearing healthcare providers you could be seen and fitted with a hearing instrument on the same day, as many retailers accept walk-in appointments.

When you've had your hearing test you will be told straight away whether you have a hearing loss or not. With the NHS a hearing aid would be provided free

of charge, although once again, there will be a waiting time before this gets fitted and the hearing aid will remain the property of the NHS, given to you on loan. The NHS will be responsible for ear moulds, maintenance and batteries for your hearing aid. Nearly all of the hearing aids available on the NHS are worn behind the ear, which is not most people's preferred solution because they can quite easily be seen by others, but this varies dependant on where you are in the UK.

One of the main advantages of seeking help through a private hearing healthcare provider is that they offer a broader range of makes and models of hearing aids, including popular in the ear styles that are difficult to see when worn. With hundreds of hearing aids available you can be confident that there is a solution out there to fit your needs, style preference and lifestyle. From in the ear hearing aids, to hearing aids worn on your spectacles, large or small, coloured or not, the selection is vast. With the new style 'open fit' hearing aids, it is possible to walk away with your new aids programmed to your needs the same day.

Prices of private hearing aids start at £300. If you choose to go private you are advised to shop around, and check to see if they include free after care service, including fine tuning, programming and

annual hearing tests for the life of your aids.

Is this you?

A recent groundbreaking study held among UK consumers has revealed a staggering 3.4 million do not use a hearing aid but could benefit from doing so.

The study – Euro Trak UK 2010 – is the most comprehensive undertaken in this field and asked nearly 15,000 consumers to answer questions not only about their personal hearing, but also about their attitudes to and knowledge about hearing aids.

It also found that the UK had the lowest rate of hearing tests in Europe.

If you think you have a hearing problem it is important to have your hearing checked as soon as possible and then regularly each year. Untreated hearing impairment can have serious consequences including isolation, depression, withdrawal, relationship problems, and low self-esteem. Allowing your hearing to deteriorate further could reduce the possibilities for improvement as you will be asking your hearing aid system to do more to compensate.

If left untreated, your brain loses its ability to identify sounds that are no longer being received – see page 7 for 'How we hear'. High frequency sounds are usually lost first, which is why people with hearing



Hearing facts & figures

- 9 million people in the UK (1 in 7) are deaf or have a hearing loss. This rises to 1 in 2 over the age of 60.
- 90 per cent of young people have experienced ringing in their ears after a night out – this is a sign of hearing damage!
- There are currently 2 million people who wear hearing aids and 4 million who could benefit from one but do not have them.
- 840 babies are born each year in UK with significant deafness.
- 51% of MP3 users are listening to their MP3 players at dangerously high volume levels (above 89 decibels (db)) for up to two hours a day.
- 1 in 5 people are blasting their ears with sound levels of 100db or more – the equivalent of hearing a pneumatic drill 10 feet away.
- 35% of people attending gigs and concerts say they have experienced ringing in their ears or dull hearing, signaling that damage to their hearing may have begun.

(www.nid.gov.uk)

(Survey results for Hearing Awareness Week 2009)

The Signs of Hearing Loss

- You have the radio & TV volume turned up loud
- You ask people to repeat what they have said
- You have problems understanding speech when there is background noise
- You think people seem to mumble
- Entertaining has become difficult and you avoid going out
- You have difficulty following conversations
- You find it hard to tell where sounds are coming from

loss often have problems hearing soft high pitched voices of women and children. Words that sound alike that contain F, S, CH, SH, H or soft C sounds are especially difficult to understand. And even more so if you cannot see the person speaking e.g. the other person is talking to you on the telephone, in a different room or has their back turned to you. **EG**



Your Hearing Assessment

The Guide tells you what it's like to have your hearing tested.

Below: A woman having her ears examined by a qualified Hearing Aid Dispenser.



Rest assured that having a hearing test is painless. You should allow an hour to be assessed as your Hearing Aid Audiologist will start by asking about your background – your general health, medical history, employment, interests and examples of changes you've noticed in your hearing. Some of this may seem strange but if you've worked in a noisy workplace with heavy machinery you'll appreciate why they want to know.

They are likely to ask you about any past problems that you have had with your ears, and disease or illnesses you have suffered from that might have effected your ears and also about any trauma or sudden changes in your ability to hear well. All questions should be answered as truthfully as possible.

You'll also have a physical examination of the ears – both the outer ear and

inner ear. They will use an instrument called an otoscope which is a cone shape magnifier with a light attached. During this part of the exam, the Audiologist will be checking for any abnormalities in the inner and outer ear. They will also be checking that the eardrum is fully intact and that there is no excess wax present inside the ear.

If your Hearing Aid Audiologist is using a video otoscope then you too may be able to see what they are seeing on a computer or TV screen.

Your hearing response will be tested with a Pure-Tone audiology test. Here you wear a set of headphones and need to indicate which tones you hear as a series of tones are played at varying pitches and volumes through the headphones. Each ear is tested separately and the tones are repeatedly played at lower volumes until you can no longer detect them.

This may be conducted in a 'sound booth', a specifically designed soundproof booth or room in which the Audiologist can get a true idea of your hearing capabilities without the interference of outside noise.

The results are plotted onto an audiogram chart showing the extent of any hearing loss or the capacity you have. Hearing is measured in units of loudness called decibels (dB). The audiogram is a visual representation of how well you hear and reveals the degree and type of hearing loss.

There are other testing procedures which may be carried out such as a speech clarity test, which determines how well you can understand conversations and speech. For this, it is recommended that you have a familiar voice read a specific list of words to you i.e. your partner, or friend whose voice you are familiar with. **EG**

How We Hear

The Essential Guide takes a look at the amazing science we have behind our sense of hearing

In learning linguistics or culture, it is very important as human beings to use our sense of hearing. Losing the sense of hearing can completely change a person's way of living. People should be properly educated how to care for their sense of hearing by knowing how it

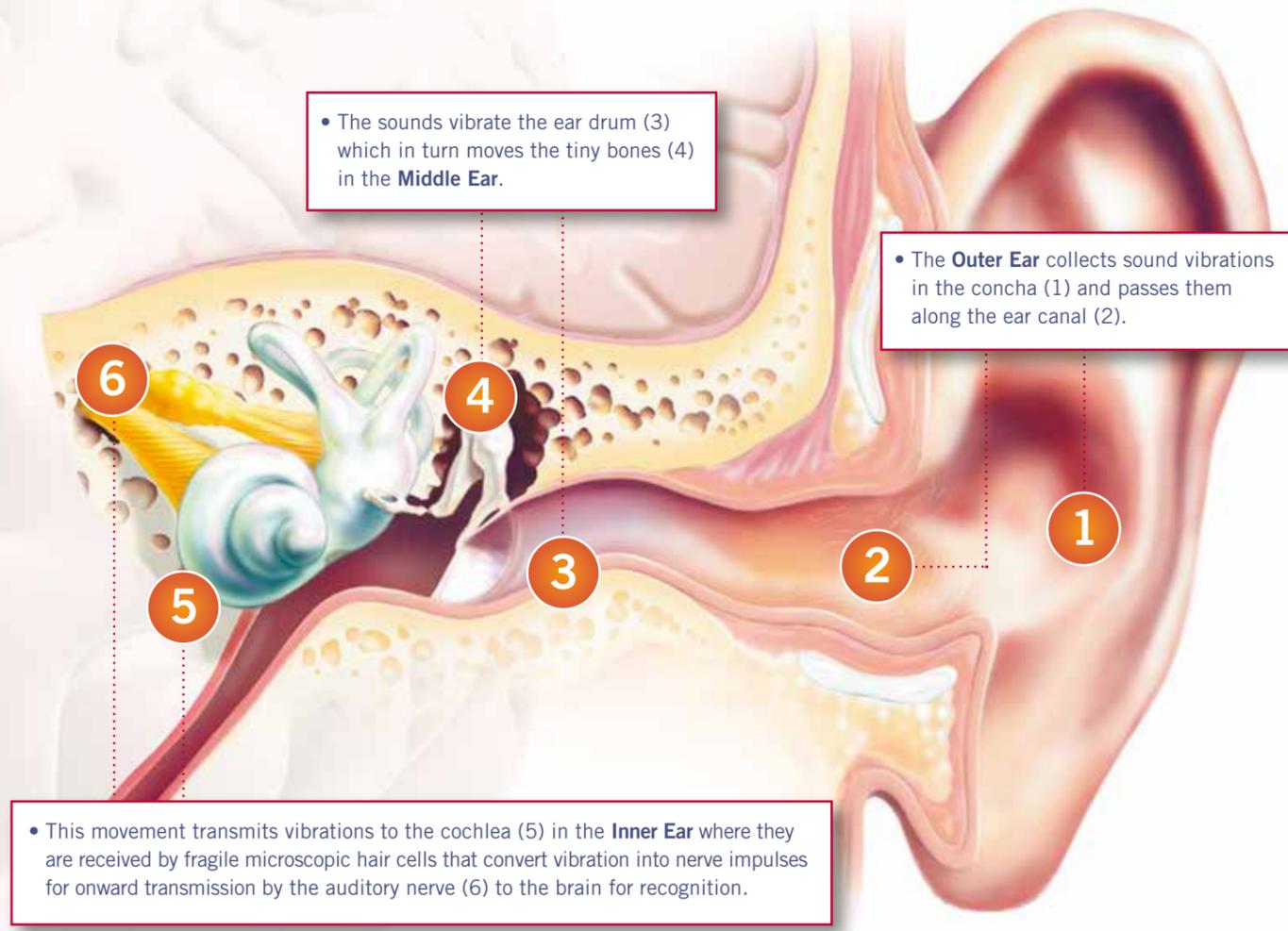
works and by preventing common causes of hearing loss.

The ear consists of three main parts and each performs a vital function in receiving and interpreting sound. These parts are the Outer Ear, Middle Ear and Inner Ear.

Anything that disturbs this

delicate balance will result in hearing loss, as it is very important that they function together perfectly.

In conclusion, **the number one thing a person needs to do right now is to have their ears checked** and also try to prevent the things that may cause damage to their hearing. **EG**



What type of hearing loss?

The Essential Guide looks at the four different types of hearing loss that can effect you or a loved one.



Broadly speaking, there are four different types of hearing loss. So until your hearing is tested, we can't say what's caused the problem or even know the consequences.

If your hearing is poor, it's probably been brought on by one of these conditions:

1. Age-Related Hearing Loss



By the age of 65, one in three of us will have some hearing loss - and by 75, that figure rises again to one in two.

It's just part of the ageing process. Over time, we lose our ability to hear softer, high pitched sounds. However, the process is gradual and often goes

unnoticed. So for now, you could be suffering without knowing it.

There's no way to prevent age-related loss. But hearing can still be improved with the help of a hearing aid - especially if the problem is tackled early on.

2. Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

The human ear can only withstand so much. And when it's pushed to the limit, some degree of hearing loss is likely.

A common problem is known as 'gradual and increasing loss'. It comes from repeated exposure to abnormally loud noises, through MP3 players, live music or nightclubs...or sometimes through the working hazards of heavy industry.

Less often, problems can be caused by 'acoustic trauma'. When someone is close to an explosion or other exceptional noise, there's a high risk of immediate hearing loss.



In either case, it's vital that the ears have time to recover - so loud environments and equipment should be avoided. Otherwise, the result is permanent and irreversible loss.

3. Conductive Hearing Loss

Every sound has to find its way through to the inner ear. But the way can be blocked by problems in the outer or middle ear.



The problem could be a damaged ear bone or

perforated eardrum, or just a build-up of wax or fluid.

4. Sensorineural Hearing Loss

When the inner ear's sensory



cells or nerve fibres are damaged, they become less adept at channelling sounds to the brain. Damage can occur through ageing or exposure to noise - and in most cases, the hearing loss will be permanent.

Have you seen a hearing aid lately?

Modern hearing devices look nothing like their predecessors. The large and

cumbersome instruments that many grew up with have been replaced by tiny, highly efficient digital pieces.

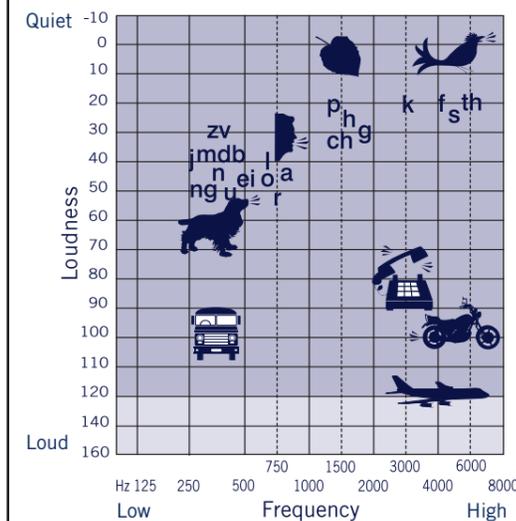
They can fit inside the ear, behind it or even in spectacle frames. So no-one has to know you have a hearing problem.

Better still, audio quality has improved beyond recognition. Every device offers clear, sharp sound and a choice of personal



settings. There's an answer out there to suit almost any problem or lifestyle. **EG**

Our Hearing Range



Common Sounds



The above symbols represent common sounds which are spread across frequencies and intensities.

Speech Sounds



The above letters represent the sounds in our language. They are also spread across frequencies and intensities. The consonants are critical for speech understanding. Note how they are centred in the high frequency area where most hearing losses occur.



Approximate decibels levels

140 dB
Gunshot, jet engine at take-off
Immediate danger of hearing damage

125 dB
Air raid siren, firecracker,
Pain Threshold

120 dB
Rock concert, sandblasting,
Risk of hearing damage in 7mins

115 dB
Baby's cry, vehicle horn,
Risk of hearing damage in 15mins

105 dB
Jackhammer, helicopter,
Risk of hearing damage in 1hr

100 dB
Chain saw, stereo headphones,
Risk of hearing damage in 2hrs

95 dB
Motorcycle, power saw,
Risk of hearing damage in 4hrs

90 dB
Lawnmower, truck traffic, average city traffic,
Risk of hearing damage in 8hrs

80 dB
Busy traffic, vacuum cleaner, hair dryer
Beginning of HSE Regulations

60 dB
Conversation, dishwasher, sewing machine
Comfortable

40 dB
Quiet room, refrigerator humming
Quiet & Comfortable

*dB SPL is a measurement of sound pressure level in decibels



Loss of hearing is almost inevitable as the years go by, but here the Essential Guide helps you to minimise it.

Preventing Hearing Loss

Let's face it: the world is pretty noisy. Most people who live in urban areas report being disturbed to the point of having disrupted sleep schedules by the sounds of traffic and city bustle, and more than ever before, certain types of headphones have been linked to a growing rate of hearing-related problems. Loud volumes on MP3 players in public spaces coupled with in-ear headphones like ear buds are causing higher levels of hearing loss

in younger and younger people. While an inevitable part of aging means a certain degree of hearing loss, there are a lot of steps that can be taken to ensure that one's hearing stays relatively sharp long into the golden years, and doesn't start to go for those who are as young as college-age. **1** Pay attention to the volume levels on your various electronic devices, especially those that are used daily. If there is a

setting on your headphones or MP3 player that reduces noise and sets a limit on how high the volume can go, select it. **2** If you're prone to blasting the television at high volumes because you strain to hear it at regular levels, you're already contributing to your own hearing problems. Consider finding a volume level that works for you, and don't go beyond that. Instead of cranking up the volume, try to find other ways to cancel out the noise.

Tinnitus - The Facts

What is Tinnitus?
Tinnitus is the name given to the condition of noises 'in the ears' and/or 'in the head' with no external source. Tinnitus noises are described variously as ringing, whistling, buzzing and humming. The noises may be heard in one ear, both ears or in the middle of the head or it may be difficult to pinpoint its exact location. The noise may be low, medium or high-pitched. There may be a single noise or two or more components. The noise may be continuous or it may come and go.

What causes tinnitus?
Tinnitus is not a disease or an illness, it is a symptom generated within a person's own auditory pathways. Although it is often assumed that tinnitus

occurs as a result of disease of the ears, this is often not the cause. The precise cause of tinnitus is still not fully understood but is usually associated with some hearing deficits.

Who gets tinnitus?
Experiences of tinnitus are very common in all age groups, especially following exposure to loud noise; however, it is unusual for it to be a major problem. There is a widely held misconception that tinnitus is confined to the elderly, but various studies have shown that it can occur at any age, even quite young children. Mild tinnitus is common - about 10 per cent of the population has it all the time and, in up to one per cent of adults, this may affect the quality of their life.



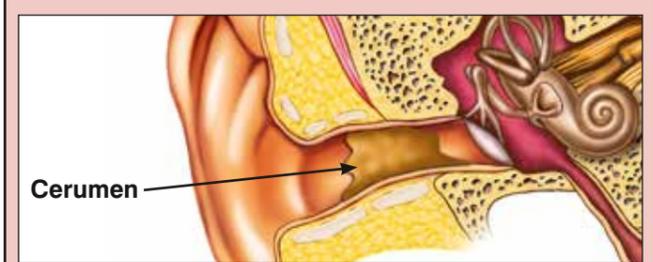
3 Don't try to watch television over another loud sound or the sound of a washing machine completing its cycle, for example. **4** Leave ear wax alone, it helps to keep your ears healthy. Cleaning your ears with cotton buds or using ear drops can damage your ears.

5 Work and leisure environments contribute a great deal of trouble to maintaining one's hearing. Using any sort of ear plugs, even just simple decibel-canceling ones from the local pharmacy, can do a world of good towards preserving your hearing. Likewise, anyone who works in an environment with consistently loud noises should take care to wear some sort of protective equipment to prevent hearing loss. Whether it is a simple pair of ear plugs

or headphones, investing in something that will allow for a significant blockage of unnecessary decibels is a huge step towards preserving the hearing you have left while preventing any more loss. **6** Taking breaks from loud, crowded environments with higher levels of noise is one of the most, if not the most, important move that someone concerned about preserving their hearing can make.

If your hearing loss is giving you cause for concern, consider getting your hearing tested. There is no need to be despondant if your hearing test determines that you could benefit from a hearing aid. You can have better hearing and a better quality of life. **EG**

Going Deaf? Is it Ear Wax?



Ear wax (or Cerumen) is a naturally occurring substance found in the outer third of the ear canal. The process of migration allows the wax to travel round the ear canal taking dead skin and bacteria with it. Using cotton buds only serves to push it back in again!

Very few people suffer with sufficient levels of wax to cause hearing loss and they may have to have their ears syringed to remove the excess material. Other forms of wax removal are available including oily sprays which can help to break it down.

A Hearing Aid Dispenser can check your ears to see if the levels of wax in your ears can be regarded as excessive.

To get your ears syringed to clear the wax contact your GP surgery, or try your local hearing aid provider.



Better hearing with both ears

Nature gave us two ears for a reason; it gave us two eyes, two arms and two legs. Just as you use both eyes to see clearly, you need two ears to hear clearly as well.

Hearing with two ears (binaural hearing) allows us to hear sounds accurately, giving perception of both space and depth as well as balance. It also gives us a sense of direction. When there is a hearing loss in both ears, even if one ear is worse than the other, binaural amplification provides the most benefit. Wearing two hearing devices allows your ears to work as well as possible – together. It means that you can hear voices from further away, tell where they are coming from, and even listen and understand more clearly in noisier situations.

Two ears work better than one

The most important benefits of wearing two hearing aids are:

- Your ability to localise sounds will improve
- It will be easier to understand speech in noisy environments
- You will experience a fuller, more comfortable sound picture
- The risk of auditory deprivation is considerably reduced

Sensing sound direction

The brain needs input from both ears in order to determine which direction sounds are coming from.

For example; think about a car honking its horn at you as you cross the road. Your ears immediately alert you to the danger by sending sound signals to your brain. Within a split second, your brain compares the intensity of the sound wave and how long it took to reach the ear. This process tells you instantly which direction the car is coming from and how far away it is; this is called sound localisation.

Understanding people in noise

Background noise makes it difficult to follow what people are saying. If you are unable to hear equally well with both ears, you can't tell

which sounds are coming from far away and which are in the background. You'll probably feel as though the sounds are merging together and you may ask people to talk more clearly, or to speak up. This is because the brain needs input from both ears in order to separate sounds effectively.

Imagine an everyday situation, like a conversation at a pub restaurant or the family sat around the table for Christmas dinner. You are trying to talk with the person next to you, others are also talking, and there's some background music playing. This situation makes it difficult for you not only to hear, but to understand what is being said.

A fuller sound picture

If you hear equally well with both ears you get more out of the sounds around you because sounds are more comfortable to listen to. You don't have to strain to hear, and sounds are clearer and richer in detail.

Imagine listening to your favourite radio show. Your hi-fi has two amplifiers and two speakers which give music and speech a natural depth and gloss. However, if only one amplifier and speaker are working, the sounds become shallow, flat and dull. Similarly, if you only wear one hearing aid, but should be wearing two, you may also perceive sound and voices to be quite dull

and difficult to interpret.

Auditory deprivation

This is when the brain gradually loses some of its ability to process information due to a continued lack of stimulation. **Have you notice loved ones no longer participating in conversations like they used to?** If they're not hearing and understanding all of the conversation, they're unlikely to be

participating. Trying to concentrate on following conversations can be tiring, and can lead to irritations.

Auditory deprivation most frequently occurs when the ear goes unaided over a long period of time. So the earlier you consider wearing hearing aids, the better your chances of minimizing this risk. When only one hearing aid is used, the risk of auditory deprivation is increased. **If you don't use it, you lose it!** EG

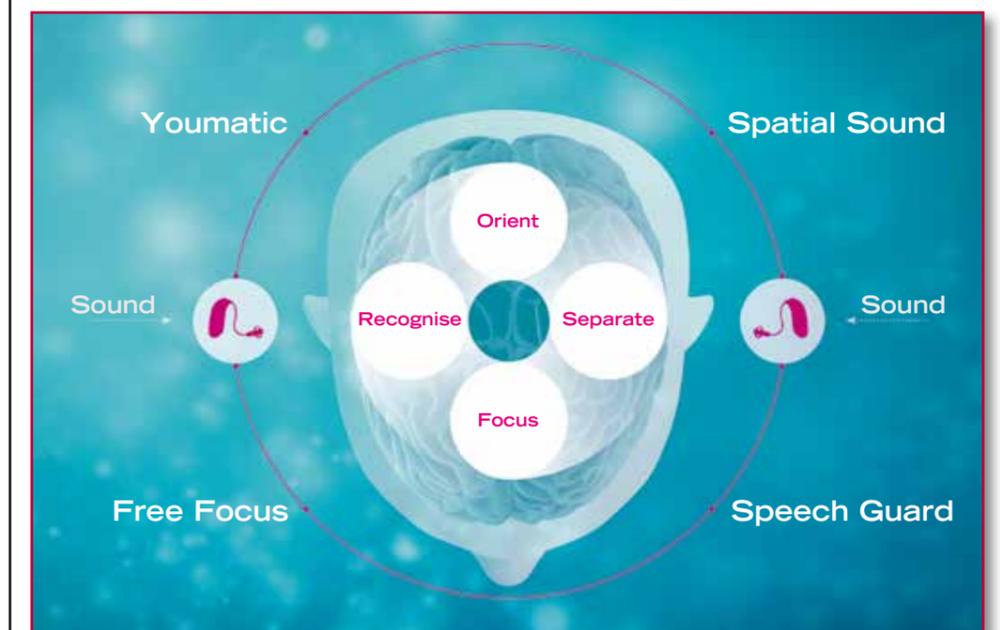
Did you know that you hear twice as much with two hearing aids - but understand four times as much? So, if two hearing aids are recommended to you then don't just settle for one.

It's Your Brain That Hears - Not Your Ears

The ears receive sounds and send them to the brain that translates the sounds into meaning. You don't hear with the ears, you hear with the brain. To provide the brain with the input it needs to make sense of sound, BrainHearing™ technology must fulfil a number of demands.

There are four functions the brain needs to carry out to make sense of the sound it receives:

- Orient the different sounds, using both ears
- Separate the sounds
- Focus on what's important, using both ears
- Recognise what each sound is and make sense of it





Styles of Hearing Aids

Essential Guide gives an overview of the range of products available to improve your hearing

When first thinking about this you might think 'They're those ugly beige things old people wear behind the ear'.

This common perception of hearing aids is, and has been, outdated for many years now. Look at some of the examples shown on these pages and you'll see that modern digital hearing aids look completely different to those of days gone by, with many now being virtually invisible when worn.

Technically, a Hearing Aid is a small electronic device that sits in or on the ear that can selectively process and amplify sounds, thereby improving the user's ability to hear more and understand speech better. In fact you can think of it as a mini super computer

because many hearing aids have more processing power than home computers.

Essentially though, all hearing aids feature four core components; at least one microphone to pick up sound, an amplifier that amplifies and processes sound, a speaker (or receiver) that transmits the amplified signal into your ear, and a battery to power it.

Regardless of the style and size of hearing aids you choose, these four parts are always contained inside. **EG**

The different types of hearing aids available to suit your hearing needs



In The Canal



Half Concha



Concha



Receiver in the Ear



Behind the Ear



Bone Conduction Aid



Invisible in the Canal



Completely in the Canal



NEW WORLD'S BEST



Oticon Opn™

What is Opn?

Oticon Opn (pronounced 'open') is the ground-breaking hearing aid from Danish hearing aid manufacturer Oticon. The remarkable hearing technology within Oticon Opn is leading the hearing care market and has become an award-winning sensation within the hearing industry. But what makes Oticon Opn one of the most revolutionary hearing aids in the market?



BrainHearing™

Oticon's BrainHearing has changed the way hearing aids are thought of. When you experience hearing loss, your brain can struggle. When sounds are missing from your sound environment, your brain tries to fill in the gaps. This can tire the brain out more quickly compared to someone who can hear clearly; even in environments where you didn't used to struggle (such as conversations in noisier environments). If left ignored, the effects of hearing loss can have an effect of your social life;

including social withdrawal. This increased social isolation is linked to the onset and development of dementia, according to recent studies. Traditional hearing aid technologies amplifies all the sounds around you – including background noise – making everything louder. Oticon's BrainHearing technology with Oticon Opn focuses on the supporting the brain as well as the ears. BrainHearing technology is able to assess what sounds are important to the wearer and amplify them based on their importance

whilst minimising the troublesome background noise that can make hearing difficult. This means your brain gets a more natural hearing experience which means your brain doesn't have to work overtime. **Environment scanning** Oticon Opn is powered by the innovative Velox™ platform which provides ultra-fast processing – 50 times faster than its predecessor. The Velox technology within Oticon Opn lets you can hear better and



remember more with less effort. The OpenSound Navigator™ is a key part of the Velox platform. The OpenSound Navigator has the capacity to manage multiple speech and sound sources simultaneously. What does that mean? That means you can stay focussed on the conversation whilst also being attentive to the people and environment around you – similar to how you would with a normal level of hearing. The OpenSound Navigator scans your environment 100 times per second; constantly analysing and balancing each and every sound it picks up individually. This means you can stay attentive whilst background noises are suppressed so you can enjoy a fuller, more natural soundscape.

- 20% Less listening effort*
- 20% More of your conversation remembered**
- 30% Better speech understanding
- 50x Faster sound processing*

Internet Connectivity Oticon Opn hearing aids use built-in, low power Bluetooth to connect to your smart phone or tablet. Whether you want your email read to you, notifications from your home security system or low battery alerts, the ultra-connected Oticon Opn can keep you in the loop wherever you are. It works using the If This Then That network (IFTTT.com), keeping you connected to your smart devices around your home and on the go. With the incredible Oticon Opn, you can open up to a world of endless connectivity possibilities. **EG**

The Award-Winning Oticon Opn

The ground-breaking, and now Award-Winning, Oticon Opn picked up awards throughout 2017.

Edison Awards 2017

Oticon Opn wins Gold in the hearing technology category at the 2017 Edison Awards.

Red Dot Awards 2017

Oticon Opn also picked up the prestigious 2017 Red Dot Design Award for its design aesthetic; which takes into account Oticon Opn's "raft of technical, performance and functionality innovations".

*Compared to Oticon Alta2 Pro
**Individual benefit may vary depending on prescription



Connectivity

Hearing aids have come a long way in recent years. With the latest technology available from the world's best hearing aid manufacturers, the hearing aid industry has changed drastically. Some of the newest developments include connectivity to your smart phone and devices.

Oticon Opn & Oticon ON

Oticon Opn has the ability to connect directly to your iPhone®. With help from the Oticon ON app, your Oticon Opn hearing device, you can talk on the phone or stream music directly to your hearing aids. You can also control the volume of your hearing aids using the app.

Oticon Opn, the world's first internet connected hearing aid, can also connect to other internet devices.

It all works by being connected to the If This Then That network (IFTTT.COM).

Oticon Opn can connect

to other devices within the network and communicate with each other. Want the lights to turn on automatically when you switch your hearing aids on? It's all possible with Oticon Opn.

Connectline

Oticon's Connectline includes a series of devices that help you stay connected to the world around you. With Connectline, making calls, having video chats, listening to music or watching TV has never been easier.

Connectline enhances the world around you, making face-to-face conversations

clearer and easier to control. You can also stream music, TV audio and phone calls directly to your hearing devices – transforming your hearing aids into a personal wireless headset.

Starkey TruLink

From American manufacturer, Starkey, comes TruLink, an easy-to-use hearing control app which works with Starkey Halo 2.

With Starkey TruLink you can directly stream phone calls, music and videos with clear sound quality with minimal distracting background sounds. [EG](#)

Recharge at night for a full day of hearing



If you have a mobile phone you will be familiar with charging your phone, typically overnight. If you have an iPad or similar you may have 'docked' it to either charge it or connect it to a music speaker.

Now, this technology is available for hearing aids. It saves you the hassle of having to change batteries. Running out of power and not having spare batteries has become a thing of the past.

It couldn't be easier to start using the rechargeable hearing aids. You simply place your hearing aids in their charger point at night and they will be fully charged in the morning ready for a full day of hearing and streaming.

If you forget to charge

overnight, don't worry, a quick 30 minutes of charging time will provide a boost of up to six hours use.

The charger unit is designed to fit in with your life. It is reliable, quick, a simple joy to use, and will look nice and neat beside your bed.

Here are the main benefits you will experience with rechargeable hearing aids:

- Three-hour charging time for a full day of power, this includes streaming.

- Quick recharge – 30 minutes for up to an additional six hours of power.
- No hassle with disposable batteries.
- Easy-to-use, reliable, simple and stylish charger.
- State-of-the-art lithium-ion battery technology. [EG](#)



Spec Aids

For those who experience hearing loss, one of the recommended solutions will be assistive hearing devices, such as hearing aids.



For many, the traditional hearing aid types, such as Behind-The-Ear, or Receiver-In-The-Ear, will not be appropriate because they may find a traditional hearing aid uncomfortable to wear. Spectacle hearing aids can be of help to those experiencing both sight and hearing loss.

How Spectacle hearing aids work

With Spectacle hearing aids, it is possible to have your hearing aids and glasses combined so that both vision loss and hearing loss can be helped.

In some cases, new frames can be provided or you can use your original

frames and have them adapted to hold the hearing technology within them.

Discreet and comfortable

As well as being able to help with both hearing and vision loss, Spectacle hearing aids are also very discreet. The hearing devices are discreetly attached to the frames so that they are barely noticeable to others.

Types of hearing loss

Spectacle hearing aids often don't need to have any part of the device resting in the ear* and so are generally suitable to those who experience Conductive hearing loss (where a

problem lies in the middle ear which is sometimes caused by a blockage such as abnormal bone growth, a ruptured ear drum or a build-up of wax).

Spectacle hearing aids can work by having a bone conductor on one of the arms of the frames that puts pressure on the mastoid bone directly behind the ear. This transfers sounds straight to the cochlea in the inner ear which sends the sound signals to the brain.

If you want to have clear vision whilst also improving your hearing, Spectacle hearing aids could be a suitable fit for you. **EG**

**dependent on hearing loss type*



Starkey SoundLens

Founded in 1967, Starkey Hearing Technologies has been producing hearing aids and being a voice of hearing care for 50 years.

The American hearing aid manufacturer has helped millions of people globally with state-of-the-art hearing aid technology

Through both their work in the hearing aid technology industry and their charitable work around the world, they continuously work towards their goal help those with hearing loss around the world.

Starkey SoundLens

From American manufacturer comes the SoundLens, also known as the world's first invisible hearing aid. It offers three core elements that resonate with those who wear it – it's custom, digital and invisible.

A custom fit hearing aid to meet the exact needs

of your unique ear canal shape, they rest within the ear comfortably. As well as being virtually invisible (dependent on the shape of your ear canal) they are also packed with state-of-the-art Starkey technology.

Starkey SoundLens offers a range of features and benefits that mean they are great fit to many.

Some of SoundLens features that make this hearing aid so popular include:

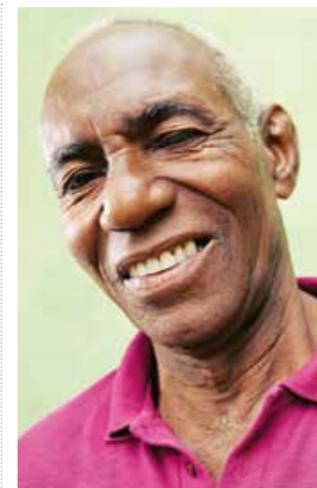
- **Easily adaptable to sounds** – this feature allows your brain to get used to new sounds by gradually adjusting the hearing aid settings to allow a smooth transition to the new devices. That means there's no controls or settings to worry about and you can

start enjoying life with clearer hearing.

- **Help hearing higher frequency sounds** – the Starkey SoundLens replicates high-frequency speech cues in lower frequencies, where they're easier for you to hear.

- **Reduced buzzing/whistling** – technology within Starkey SoundLens reduces feed-back which means there is a reduced buzzing and whistling in your hearing devices.

- **Invisible in the canal** – the world's first hearing aid that is invisible-in-the-canal. They fit deep within the ear canal where they are virtually undetectable to others (depending on the anatomy of your ear). **EG**





Widex



Widex is a Danish hearing aid manufacturer that was founded in 1956 and is now one of the largest manufacturers of hearing aid technology in the world.

Widex specialise in a range of hearing aid technology. Some of the hearing aid technology they offer includes the CROS and BiCROS systems.

Widex CROS and BiCROS Systems
The CROS Systems by Widex are designed to help those who have severe hearing loss/deafness in one ear but have a normal level of hearing in the other.

The BiCROS systems are designed for those who have a severe hearing loss/deafness in one ear and a degree of hearing loss in the other.

These systems are designed like an ordinary behind-the-ear hearing aid. It works by picking up sound from your current sound environment and transmitting it to the hearing aid that is on your other ear.

Having a good level of hearing in both ears is important for many reasons. One of those reasons includes being able to locate sounds; essential when crossing a busy street

and needing to be able to hear the traffic and sounds surrounding you.

The CROS and BiCROS systems pick up sounds for whichever side you have hearing loss which means you can hear and locate the sounds around you without having to look around.

The Widex CROS and BiCROS systems provide a premium sound quality with no echo which means they are particular good for hearing speech. With these systems, you can seamlessly re-join and enjoy conversations again; no matter which side of you the speaker is. **EG**



Talking Point

Here are some techniques which relatives and friends can adopt in order to make conversation easier for hard-of-hearing individuals, whether they are using hearing aids or not. Wearing professionally fit, good quality hearing instruments can make a huge difference to your ability to communicate with others, but these simple tips below will also help.

3 Easy ways to communicate better

1. Talk face to face

• Face the person you are talking to. Try to avoid conversations from different rooms or with your back turned. It is easier to hear what people say when you can see visual cues like facial expressions and lip movements.

• **Move closer!** The closer you are to the person you're speaking with, the easier it is for you to understand what's being said.

• If you need to communicate with several people, sit somewhere in the middle rather than at the end of a table for example. This way you'll be able to hear and see everyone.

• Try not to talk while chewing – it makes it harder to understand what you are saying, and almost

impossible for others to read your lips.

• Sit with your back to the window – when the light falls on the person you are talking to, it becomes easier for you to see his/her lips and facial expressions.

• If you talk while reading the newspaper, or lean your cheek on your hand while talking, this will also make lip reading difficult for others.

2. Speak at a natural pace

• You don't need to shout. It's perfectly okay to speak at a normal conversational level when you talk with someone who wears hearing aids. Most instruments amplify a normal level of speech, so if you shout, it may become too loud or even painful for the listener.

• Try not to talk too fast. Speak naturally, but try to enunciate your words more clearly. This will naturally slow your speech.

• If your companion has trouble understanding you, try rephrasing your sentence rather than just repeating yourself. Some words are easier to hear than others.

• In group situations, try not to interrupt or talk over each other.

• If the conversation suddenly changes you may consider informing the person with the hearing loss; just so it's a bit easier for them to understand what is being said.

• Arrive early at lectures or seminars and ask the speaker to use a microphone. And get a seat near the front - move closer!

3. Reduce background noise

Background noise can be a real barrier to communication

• Try to eliminate background noise when having a conversation, especially when using the telephone at home. Turn off or mute the television and close any open windows or doors to reduce external noise from traffic for example.

• Move closer to the person you're talking or listening to so your voices are louder than the background noise. This will also make your face and lips easier to read.

• Alternatively, try to find somewhere quieter to talk.
• If going to the cinema or theatre call in advance to see whether they provide assistive listening devices. **EG**



No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means or photocopied without prior permission.

www.essentialguidetohearingaids.co.uk