

Celebrate Better Speech and Hearing in May!

Better Hearing and Speech Month

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month



Image description: light pastel watercolor background, text reads: May 2023 Better Speech and Hearing Month

May brings us Better Hearing and Speech Month! Currently, more than 1.5 million people worldwide live with hearing loss; this number is anticipated to increase. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 1 in 4 individuals will have hearing loss by 2050.

The impacts of hearing loss can be profound. Unaddressed hearing loss may impact communication and speech, language development, education, employment, economic stability, mental health, and cognition. Globally, WHO reports that unaddressed hearing loss leads to an annual global cost of \$980 billion in the health sector, in educational support, in productivity, and to society.

Many impacts of hearing loss can be mitigated through early detection and interventions. Some interventions may include specialized education programs, sign language instruction for children and their families, using hearing instruments (including hearing aids and cochlear implants) and increased communication access through interpreters, closed captioning, assistive communication technology, and telecommunication technology.

The most preventable hearing loss is noise trauma. The WHO reports that noise is now acknowledged as an important health issue, and is considered one of the top environmental risks today. Over half of the population aged 12-35 listen to music or other media via personal audio devices at volumes that create risks for hearing loss.

It is essential to be aware of the impacts of hearing loss – for yourself, your loved ones, and the effects on the community. Generally, some hearing loss is not preventable, but some types of hearing losses can be avoided. There are ways YOU can protect your hearing and be more aware of your hearing health.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT [HEARING INSTRUMENTS, ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM \(ACT\)](#), OR [TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM](#)

Ways you can protect your hearing

- Have routine hearing examinations, with baselines in early adulthood, and every three years (sooner if any changes are noted).
- Avoid loud noises and wear ear protection if you will be exposed to loud noises.
- Take listening breaks when wearing headphones and earbuds.
- Be proactive in healthy living. Many health issues can also cause hearing loss.
- If you have concerns about your or a loved one's hearing health, speak to a medical provider. Early detection is vital for treatment.

Are you a service provider?

If you are a service provider and interested in learning how to support your clients with hearing loss better, please reach out to

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