

Listening Strategies

Although hearing aids have become very advanced they cannot restore hearing to normal. Today's instruments are more flexible and have better sound quality, but they cannot repair a damaged hearing nerve or revive a person's ability to interpret what they hear.

There are techniques that family members and hearing impaired individuals can adapt to make conversation easier to follow.



10 Basic Rules for Good Communication

1. Indicate if you do not understand.
2. Speak slightly louder, clearly, and not too fast.
3. Speak to others as you want others to speak to you.
4. Determine the topic of conversation.
5. Position yourself for good communication and limit background noise.
6. Look and listen for key words and phrases.
7. Plan ahead for difficult listening situations.
8. Be creative and assertive in solving communication problems.
9. Take responsibility for communicating effectively.
10. Keep a sense of humor.

Speaking to a Person with a Hearing Loss

- Get the person's attention before you speak.
- Face the person in good light and speak from 3 – 6 feet (don't expect the person to hear from another room or with your back to them).
- Speak clearly and slowly, but don't overemphasize.
- Don't shout.
- Move away from background noise (don't expect the person to hear when the TV is on or multiple people are talking at once).
- Give clues when changing the topic.
- Don't put objects in front of your face or have objects in your mouth (gum, cigarettes, food).
- Use facial expressions and gestures.
- Rephrase when you are not understood, which is usually better than repeating.
- Ask the person what can be done to make the conversation easier.
- Be patient and positive.

Assistive Listening Devices

Some listening situations may be more difficult than others- either because of background noise or because the sound comes from too far away.

Assistive Listening devices can be helpful together with hearing aids in situations such as these:

- Listening to lectures or seminars
- Using the phone
- Watching TV
- Listening to music
- Listening in meetings



Public places such as churches and theaters often have an infra red or teleloop system which can transmit sound directly into a head set or your own hearing aid if it has a telecoil option.

A telecoil is an option available on most hearing aids that makes a better coupling between the phone and the hearing aid. The microphone is turned off and a magnetic coil in the hearing aid is activated to pick up the magnetic field that a phone emits. This reduces the occurrence of feedback.

Our offices have display models of various assistive devices. These include TV EARS, amplified telephones, portable amplifiers for the phone and other signaling devices.

