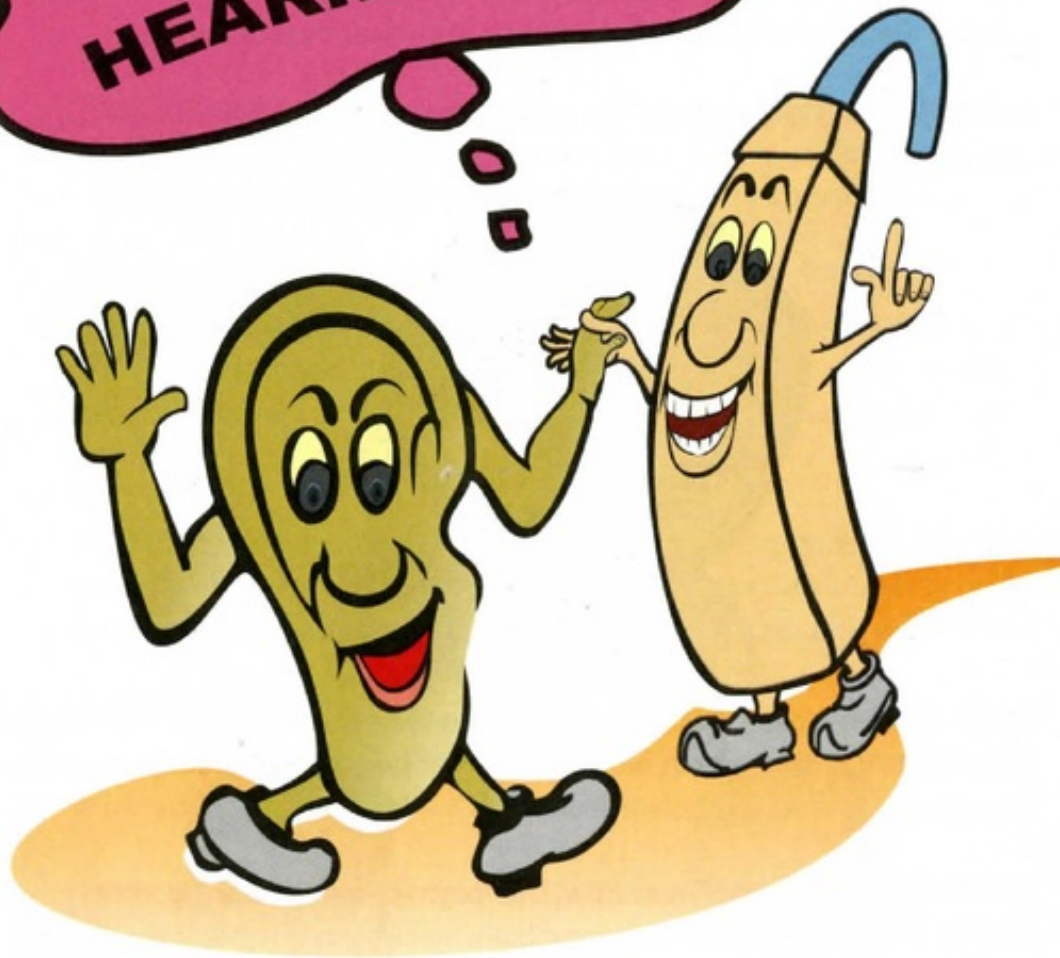


Fact about Hearing Loss and Hearing Aids

by Audiology 14

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FACTS ABOUT HEARING LOSS AND HEARING AIDS



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FACTS ABOUT HEARING LOSS AND HEARING AIDS

1. MYTH: Hearing loss is normal at my age

FACT: Hearing loss is not 'normal' at any age. No matter how old or young a person is, hearing is still an important sense.

2. MYTH: I would know if I had a hearing loss.

FACT: Sometimes, people have a problem only in one ear, or the problem may be very mild. In such cases, hearing loss is very difficult to notice. Usually, friends and family members notice the hearing problem first.

3. MYTH: Hearing loss cannot be identified till the child is at least three years old.



FACT: Hearing loss can be identified even in newborn babies. To ensure that the child receives help early, get his/her hearing checked as soon as you suspect a hearing problem. It does not matter how young the child is.

4. MYTH: My child cannot hear now, but might develop hearing later.

FACT: If the child has a hearing problem since birth, it is not likely that the child will start hearing naturally at a later age. You should get your child's hearing tested as soon as you suspect a problem, and not wait for the child to start hearing on his/her own.

5. MYTH: My type of hearing loss cannot be helped.

FACT: Certain types of hearing impairment can be treated by medicines. Earlier, some types of hearing impairment could not be managed using hearing aids. For example, a person with hearing impairment only in the higher frequencies (high pitched sounds) would not have benefited much

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from the use of hearing aids. But now, hearing aids can help almost any person with a hearing loss. Hearing loss that cannot be corrected by surgery or medicines can be helped by using hearing aids.

6. MYTH: Hearing aids cure hearing loss

FACT: Just as eyeglasses only improve vision, but do not bring back eyesight, hearing aids make sounds louder and make listening easier. They often make a big difference in the person's hearing and can improve their quality of life. However, they do not restore normal hearing.

7. MYTH: I am too old for a hearing aid.

FACT: Older adults do take a longer time to get used to their hearing aids. But there is no age limit to get a hearing aid. Whatever the person's age is, if they have a hearing impairment, they will benefit from a hearing aid.

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8. MYTH: A hearing aid will damage my hearing.

FACT: A hearing aid is prescribed by a qualified professional according to the wearer's needs. It is carefully selected such that it will improve his/her hearing. It is very unlikely that a hearing aid will cause further damage.

9. MYTH: Smaller the hearing aid is, the better it is.

FACT: The 'best' hearing aid for an individual depends on the type and severity of the individual's hearing loss. There are several types of hearing aids, and the type that is best for a person is not necessarily the smallest.

10. MYTH: Two hearing aids aren't really necessary.



FACT: When we hear normally, we hear through both ears. Most persons, especially children, benefit more from two hearing aids. With two hearing aids,

the user can enjoy better hearing in noise, good sound quality, better understanding of speech and easier localization. The person can also keep the hearing aids at a lower volume. Moreover, if the person has any tinnitus (ringing in the ear), the use of two hearing aids might help mask the tinnitus.

11. MYTH: I can wear a hearing aid only when I need it

FACT: We need our sense of hearing at all times, not just for special occasions or important conversations. Therefore, the hearing aid should be worn at all times. At first, you might find it uncomfortable. Start by wearing the hearing aid only for a few hours everyday. Gradually increase the duration of usage till you can comfortably wear it throughout the day

12. MYTH: Wearing a hearing aid is a sign that you're getting old.



FACT: It is not just old people who require hearing aids. Many infants, children and young adults also have hearing impairment, and benefit from the use of hearing aids.

13. MYTH: Hearing aids are unaffordable.

FACT: Hearing aids are so useful that they are usually worth their price. Moreover, there are government welfare schemes so that even people who cannot afford to purchase hearing aids get hearing aids. There are also agencies that sell hearing aids at a discounted price, thus saving a lot of money for the client.

14. MYTH: My hearing loss isn't bad enough for me to wear a hearing aid

FACT: Do not wait for your hearing to become very bad before choosing to

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wear a hearing aid. Even if the hearing loss you have is mild, a hearing aid might help you hear even soft sounds well. You might be able to understand speech better. In case of children, the need for hearing aids is even greater.

15. MYTH: My child is too young to be fitted with a hearing aid.

FACT: Even infants less than a month old can be fitted with hearing aids. In fact, the earlier a hearing aid is fit, the better. The child would have better chances of learning to speak and develop language skills on par with hearing children.

16. MYTH: "Wait till the child is 3-5 years old, the child will start speaking... His/her grandfather didn't start talking till 5 years of age."

FACT: A normally developing child would begin talking (2-3 small, simple words) between 12-18 months of age. Do not wait for the child to grow older, and then start speaking. Be aware of developmental milestones, and visit a Speech and Hearing centre if you suspect any delay. As hearing loss is one of the most common reasons why children don't start talking, you should also get his/her hearing tested as soon as possible.

17. MYTH: Children who have delayed speech and language development due to hearing loss begin to speak once they start wearing hearing aids.

FACT: Hearing aids only make sounds louder, so that even the child with hearing impairment can hear them. It is true that children learn speech mainly through hearing, but the fitting of hearing aids alone is not enough to ensure good speech and language development. Almost all children require speech-language therapy/listening therapy after the fitting of hearing aids in order to learn good communication skills.

18. MYTH: Children who have hearing impairment cannot attend a school for normal children.



FACT: Given the right kind of therapy/ help at the right time, children with hearing impairment can attend a school for normal children. They can also participate in other activities, just like children with normal hearing can.

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19. MYTH: All hearing impaired people use sign language.



FACT: Many people with hearing impairment can, and do, use speech to communicate, as it is the most natural and easy mode of communication. Even a person who has had hearing impairment since childhood can learn to speak and communicate effectively, if aided and trained.

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If you have any questions/comments, or need any help, feel free to contact us:

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