

Hearing Aids

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Hearing aids are devices that make sounds louder. If you have hearing loss that is not medically treatable, hearing aids may help.

There are many different types of hearing aids available. After your hearing test, your audiologist will help you find the right hearing aids for you.

One or Two Hearing Aids

If you have hearing loss in both ears, it is usually recommended to have two hearing aids. Your brain uses the information it gets from both ears to help you:

- figure out where sounds are coming from
- filter out sounds you don't need
- hear better when there is background noise.

Your brain does a better job of processing sound when it gets the same information from both ears.

If you have financial concerns, it is often recommended to get two hearing aids with lower technology than one hearing aid with better technology.

Technology Options

The technology inside the hearing aids determines the cost.

- **Hearing aids that are less expensive** may need manual adjustment and do well in quiet situations.

- **Hearing aids that are more expensive** are mostly automatic and adjust themselves as you go between different listening situations.

Your audiologist will ask you about how much time you spend in difficult listening situations to help determine what level of technology is right for you.

Hearing Aid Options

There are many different options available for hearing aids. Some of these include:

- **directional microphone:** This helps you hear better when there is a lot of background noise.
- **feedback system:** This helps to get rid of high-pitched, whistling sounds.
- **telecoil or telephone program:** This allows you to talk on the phone without hearing high-pitched, whistling sounds (feedback).
- **frequency transposition:** This moves high-frequency (pitch) sounds so that the parts of the ear that can hear middle-frequency sounds can also hear high-frequency sounds.
- **multiple programs:** This helps you to be on the best program (setting) for the sound environment you are in.
- **volume adjustment:** This allows you to adjust the volume setting for certain sound environments.
- **connection to other devices:** This allows you to connect to a cell phone or television through wireless technology.

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What to Expect from Your Hearing Aids

If you have hearing loss, part of your ear has been damaged. A hearing aid can't bring you back normal hearing but it can help you hear better.

Even with the best technology, there will be times when you still have problems hearing. It will take some time for you to get used to your new hearing aids.

Types of Hearing Aids

There are many different types of hearing aid styles (how it will look on the outside of your ear). You and your audiologist will discuss the different styles and decide which one is right for you.

Behind-the-ear



Photo courtesy of Phonak

A behind-the-ear hearing aid:

- fits behind the ear
- is good for mild to profound hearing loss
- can be used with either a custom ear mold or a non-custom tip.

Behind-the-ear (thin tube)



Photo courtesy of Phonak

A behind-the-ear (thin tube) hearing aid:

- fits behind the ear
- is good for mild to profound hearing loss
- can be used with either a custom ear mold or a non-custom tip.

In-the-ear



Photo courtesy of Phonak

An in-the-ear hearing aid:

- fits completely inside the outer ear
- is good for mild to severe hearing loss
- has a custom fit and requires an ear impression.

In-the-canal



Photo courtesy of Phonak

An in-the-canal hearing aid:

- is made to fit the size and shape of your ear canal
- is good for mild to moderately-severe hearing loss
- has a custom fit and requires an ear impression.

Completely-in-the-canal



Photo courtesy of Phonak

A completely-in-the-canal hearing aid:

- is almost completely hidden inside your ear canal
- is good for mild to moderately-severe hearing loss
- has a custom fit and requires an ear impression.

Whom to Call With Questions

Call your audiologist if you have questions or concerns about your hearing aids or follow-up care.