

The Senior AdvantageSM



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- FREE electronic hearing tests by licensed specialist
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THRU FEB. 28, 1993

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MISSING SOUNDS AROUND YOU?

Get Hearing Checked, Audiologists Say

More than 21 million Americans of all ages have a hearing loss.

An estimated 40 percent of those age 65 and over have a hearing impairment. An increasing number of young people also have hearing loss because of exposure to loud music and other sources of noise. A recent study in Orange County, Calif., of 1,400 students found that hearing loss had increased from 3 percent of students 10 years ago to between 7 and 13 percent today.

If you use stereo headsets, operate power tools or commute daily in heavy traffic, you may be exposed to potentially damaging noise.

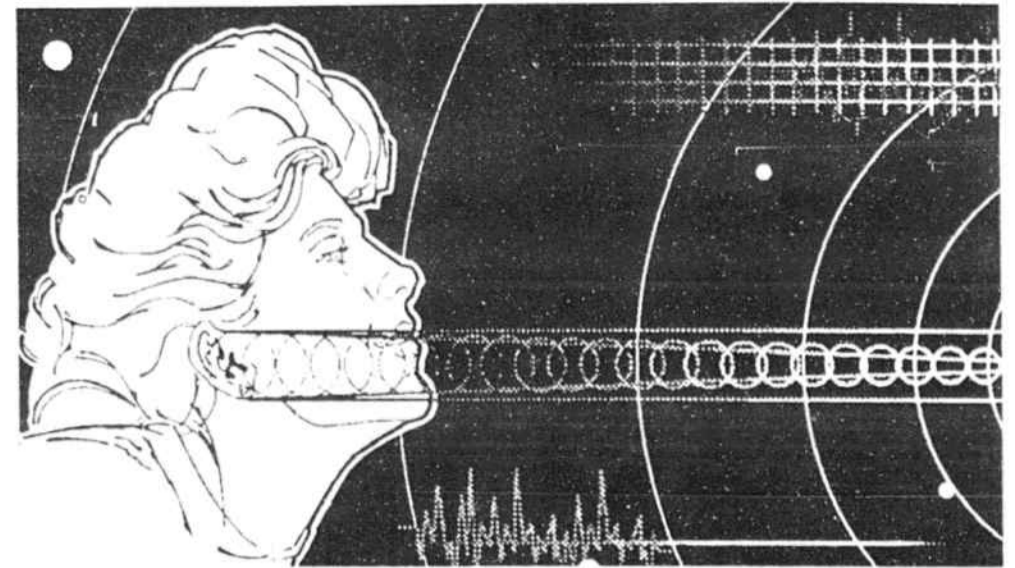
How do you know if you have a hearing loss? These are the signs:

- You hear voices when people are talking but frequently strain to understand their words.
- You often ask people to repeat what they said.
- You don't laugh at jokes because you miss too much of what is said.
- You frequently complain that people mumble.
- You play the TV or radio too loudly.
- You cannot hear the doorbell or the telephone.
- You find that looking at people makes it easier to understand them.

If you experience any of the signs of hearing loss more than occasionally, you should have your hearing tested by an audiologist, according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Audiologists, who are hearing health care professionals certified by ASHA, identify and assess hearing impairment and determine the best course for helping each person according to individual needs and lifestyle.

Millions of people with an un-



corrected hearing loss can benefit from a properly fit hearing aid and instructions on how best to use it, according to ASHA.

Only about 5-10 percent of adults have a condition that is medically or surgically treatable, according to ASHA. Audiologists refer these people to physicians who specialize in diseases of the ear or to primary care physicians.

A new information packet about hearing loss is now available from ASHA. The packet provides information about:

- Signs of hearing loss.
- The pitfalls of purchasing a hearing aid directly from a catalog.
- Hearing aids using digital technology.
- Types of hearing aids.
- Hearing testing by audiologists.

To receive this information packet, call the toll-free ASHA HELPLINE at 1-800-638-8255; in Maryland, Alaska, and Hawaii, call 1-301-897-8682. The information is also available by writing ASHA, 10801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852.

Lyme Disease Protection Tips

The high-risk season for Lyme disease begins in spring and continues until September. With a few precautions, people can greatly reduce their chances of being bitten by the tick carrying the disease. The Arthritis Foundation offers these suggestions:

- Wear protective clothing:
- Check yourself, children and pets for ticks:
- Clear away brush or grassy areas near your home that attract ticks.

Wooded or marshy areas are

home to the tiny tick that can carry a special kind of bacteria. When these ticks bite, they can pass along the infection that causes Lyme disease.

Early signs of Lyme disease include flu-like symptoms out of flu season, an expanding skin rash and joint or muscle pain. If left untreated, Lyme disease can cause serious nerve or heart problems, as well as a disabling type of arthritis. Early treatment of Lyme disease symptoms with antibiotics can prevent these more serious medical problems.

Beating The Blahs After 55

Being tired is a universal feeling at any age in America, but as we get older many of us find ourselves more tired. Fatigue is one of the biggest complaints of people age 55 and over. But there are some key strategies for fighting these blahs and insuring an active mind and body.

1. **Get enough rest.** Most people need from six to eight hours of sleep a night. Some try to get too much sleep, and they end up having a restless night, leaving them groggy in the morning. To determine how much sleep you really need, go to bed one hour before your regular bedtime for a week and then one hour after your regular bedtime for a week. Compare how refreshed you feel all day long. Remember it's not the quantity of sleep that is desired, but the quality.

2. **Eat right.** Eating a big meal can make you feel tired. Too much food in the body diverts blood and oxygen from the brain to the digestive system, making you feel fatigued. Fats and sugars will especially add to your tiredness. Fats take longer than other food components to convert to energy. The carbohydrates in sugar cause a sudden peak of energy followed by a sudden drop in blood sugar. This drop contributes to a feeling of exhaustion. To get the energy without the drop, enjoy a substitute of complex carbohydrates like whole-grain bread, pasta and fresh fruit.

Eating a big lunch might make you tired, but eating

a large meal late at night may keep you awake. Sometimes when your digestive system is busy working overtime, it's difficult to fall asleep.

3. **Take vitamins and iron.** Lack of essential vitamins and iron can contribute to fatigue. Consult your doctor for your proper allowance.

4. **Avoid fatigue-causing substances.** Caffeine can be a culprit of fatigue if your body is dependent on it. When you miss having caffeine, your body automatically tires.

Cigarette smoking will also lead to fatigue. It prevents the body from utilizing oxygen and reduces the level of vitamin C in the system.

Medications like antihistamines and drugs that control hypertension or heat disease can have sleep inducing side effects.

5. **Avoid obesity.** Being overweight slows the body down and contributes to a feeling of prolonged fatigue.

6. **Exercise.** Exercise can help you feel more pep. It not only improves your self image but it increases oxygen to the body and brain making you feel awake.

As we age, it's natural for the body to slow down and tiredness to increase. But if you're feeling fatigued over a long period of time, consult a physician. This might be an indication that you're ill or suffering from depression. Most importantly, beat the blahs by having fun!