



Important Suggestions

Save yourself some disappointment and initial discouragement - don't try to use your new hearing aids too fast. It takes time to get used to hearing aids. Begin by using your new hearing system at home, either alone or with one other person you know, so you become familiar with the change in the way they sound.

1. Background sounds will now be louder to you when you wear your new aids. In the first few days, just listen to background sounds in your home. Try to identify new sounds that you have not heard in some time, such as the hum of your refrigerator or the sound of keys jingling.

2. Your own voice will sound strange at first. Remember your aids are amplifying your own voice as well as that of others. You will get accustomed to this very rapidly.

3. After the first few days you should progress to listening to one person at a time. Wear your hearing aids only as long as they are comfortable. If they become uncomfortable or you become fatigued, remove them until the next day.

4. Group conversations are the next step. Group conversations require you to focus on who you want to follow in any given group. You should eventually develop the ability to concentrate on the speech that you want to hear, and ignore the background. Gradually try your system with small groups and in more complex listening situations such as restaurants or your work place.

5. Finally, you may wear your aids out in public places and for sounds that come from radios, televisions and public address-type systems. Where you sit in church, movies, concerts, etc. will make a difference in how you hear.

6. All sounds from TV, radios, movies and public address systems are "artificial sound". In other words, it is not a real person, but a speaker you

are listening to. This type of hearing requires you to practice in order to do well. Develop a list of words that you commonly misunderstand and practice listening to them with a friend.

7. Do not judge your hearing aids prematurely. They have been designed specifically for your hearing loss and fitted to give you the best speech understanding possible.

8. If you are having difficulty deciding where to set your volume control, try this: turn the television to a normal volume and set the hearing aids to the sound of the TV. You may be tempted to "play" with the volume controls often, turning them up and down excessively. Remember, you must become accustomed to different levels of sounds...normal hearing people do not have volume controls. Discover your comfort limits by adjusting the volume of your hearing system in different environments. If the loudness becomes uncomfortable, slowly decrease the volume or change to a more preferred setting.

9. You must have a realistic expectation about hearing aids. Their purpose is to help you hear speech sounds better. There is no guarantee that all voices or music will be 100% clear, but you do have the ability to hear them better. It takes time for your brain to adjust to your new hearing aids and you will enjoy their benefits. Experiment. Work with your hearing professional during the early adjustment period to gain the confidence and skills which will maximize your hearing through the use of your new hearing system.

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