

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CENTER FOR HEARING, SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

## Halloween Tips for Better Hearing

People with untreated hearing loss have a lower quality of life and untreated hearing loss can be linked to irritability, fatigue, stress, depression and withdrawal from life. If you have hearing loss, you may not be aware of it, especially if it has happened over time. Your family members or friends may notice that you're having trouble understanding what others are saying.

### Digital Technology in Hearing Aids

Advances in digital technology have enabled hearing aids to become like mini-computers, performing millions of calculations and adjustments instantly. They can do more and are smaller than even a few years ago.

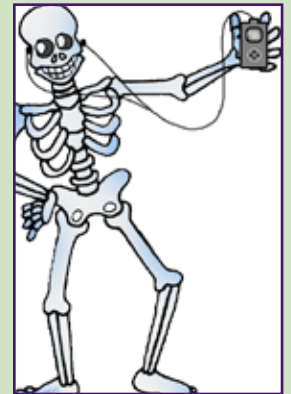
Digital products are offered at different levels and prices. As you go from basic to advanced, the ability to make finer adjustments, the number of features, and the intricacy of the digital circuit increases—as does the cost. However, keep in mind that adding all the features and bells and whistles does not necessarily guarantee a better result. The configuration and severity of the loss, as well as the ability of the user to appropriately use the features on the more advanced products, are only a few of the considerations when choosing the most suitable product for any given person.

Modern hearing aids often have advanced features like:

- Digital Noise Reduction: Can assist the user in being more comfortable in noise but does not help with word recognition.
- Directional microphones: Can assist with better word recognition and provide better communication in noise, however in very noisy places, no hearing aid works well.
- Bluetooth connectivity: Enables a hearing aid user to stream a cell phone or mp3 player to the hearing aids.
- Ear-to-Ear technology: Some hearing aids can talk to each other. When the volume control or program button is changed on one, the other one also changes.
- Datalogging and datalearning: Datalogging

Here are a few simple tips for safeguarding your hearing.

- Know how much noise is too much. If you have to raise your voice to be heard, you are in a potentially hazardous environment for your hearing. Sounds at or above 85 decibels (dB) can damage your ears. A normal conversation is about 60 dB. Chainsaws, hammer drills, and bulldozers can be over 100 dB.
- Reduce the noise. To help protect your ears, invest in a good pair of ear plugs. In addition, make a conscious effort to keep the volume of the radio or TV at an audible level, but no louder. Listening to a portable mp3 music player too loudly or for too long could permanently damage your hearing.
- Keep up on innovations in hearing aids. Technology has come a long way in restoring hearing acuity.



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means the hearing aid can actually record and keep track of hours of daily use and how much the user is using one program versus another. This can be helpful for the audiologist when making adjustments at follow-up appointments. Datalearning means the hearing aid “learns” and applies your volume changes and preferences for various listening situations if it happens consistently enough.

Talk to your audiologist about the benefits of hearing aids and what's new in hearing aid technology. As in most technology fields, the hearing aid industry is constantly working on hearing aid advancements and enhancements.

*Mention this article and receive a 10% discount off the price of new hearing aids.*

## What is Auditory Processing Disorder (APD)?

**A**uditory processing is a term used to describe what happens when your brain recognizes and interprets the sounds around you. Individuals with APD can't process the information they hear in the same way as others because their ears and brain don't fully coordinate.

Most language is learned by listening. In order to learn, a child must be able to listen to and separate important speech from all other noises at school and at home. When auditory skills are weak, a child may experience auditory hearing overload. This makes learning more challenging and sometimes too difficult without special assistance. Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) is the inability to discriminate among or recognize or understand auditory information. Most people with auditory processing problems have normal intelligence and normal hearing sensitivity.

Symptoms are numerous and range from person to person. Some possible symptoms are:

- Shows unusual reactions to sudden and/or loud sounds.
- Shows unusual reactions to specific types of sounds.
- Has difficulty recalling names, dates, times and other details.
- Has difficulty associating a sound with its source or location.
- Has difficulty following directions.
- Has difficulty with reading, spelling and/or written expression.
- Appears to rely on sight vocabulary or memorization for reading and spelling.
- Often is disorganized or forgetful.

APD is an often misunderstood problem because many of the behaviors noted above can also appear in other conditions like learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and even depression.

### How is APD Diagnosed?

Audiologists can determine if a child has APD. Although speech-language pathologists can get an idea by interacting with the child, only audiologists can perform auditory processing testing and determine if there really is a problem. Once diagnosed, kids with APD usually work with a speech therapist.



One of the APD screening methods involves listening to a variety of signals and responding to them via repetition, raising one's hand, pushing a button, or in some other way.

### Strategies that Children with APD Can Use

- Reduce background noises and other distractions when listening.
- Ask for clarification when you don't understand something.
- Develop healthy habits. The mind and body operate better with a good diet, exercise and enough sleep.
- Repeat the directions to yourself or track them until you complete a task.
- Use natural speech-reading cues to help you understand a message. Watch the person who is speaking.
- Take advantage of current technology to support learning.

If parents, teachers, and other professionals discover a child's learning disability early and provide the right kind of help, it can give the child a chance to develop skills needed to lead a successful and productive life. The Center for Hearing, Speech and Language offers auditory processing disorder testing and treatment in our Speech, Language and Learning Department.

### A Cautionary Halloween Tale North Idaho Woman Chomps on Own Hearing Aid

The Spokesman-Review reports that a woman had shifted positions on her bed and a hearing aid fell out of her ear and dropped right into her open box of Halloween candies. Without looking, she grabbed a handful of chocolate candy and popped them into her mouth and bit down. She immediately realized that one of the items in her mouth was not candy. She was able to salvage the chocolate-covered hearing aid with a good cleaning.

### A True Story

"I just got new hearing aids. I was grading papers (I'm a professor) and I hear a Darth Vader type noise. I held my breath to concentrate and it disappeared! I went back to grading and I heard it again! I was really scared being alone in the house, so I got up to investigate. Now, not only do I hear rasping, but a rustling too! I walk all over the house, getting more and more freaked out until I realize: DUH! I'm hearing my own breathing and my clothes rubbing together. I laughed hysterically at myself. It had been so long since I heard that I didn't remember it."

*posted on About.com*

## CHSL's Sound Solutions Going Strong

Sound Solutions hearing conservation program was pioneered as a division of CHSL in 1972, marketing primarily to manufacturing businesses who must meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) sound level standards in the workplace.

The hearing test for employees is provided on our mobile screening trailer in a sound-proof booth. Sound Solutions provides accurate measurement of the noise levels at manufacturing plants and also the most up-to-date OSHA compliant training films. The Sound Solutions trailer travels all over the state to service clients like food manufacturers, metal shops, printing companies, and gravel pit and concrete production facilities to name just a few. Each company is provided with a comprehensive reporting package with certified audiologist review of the hearing test results.



Despite the economy, Sound Solutions has seen an increase in the number of employees tested which is good news for CHSL. The revenue from Sound Solutions helps CHSL fund our nonprofit work of helping those unable to pay.

## Do Herbal Remedies Help Hearing Loss?

The Better Hearing Institute reports that there isn't data from scientific research done in the United States to substantiate claims that herbal remedies can help tinnitus. Some herbal and supplement companies make the claim based on research done in foreign countries (perhaps not to U.S. standards), but the same results have not been replicated in the United States.

However, on a positive note, the National Institutes of Health here in the United States has determined that men over the age of 60 may benefit from higher folate intake to reduce the risk of developing hearing loss. Folate is a B-complex vitamin found in many beans, vegetables and some fruits.



### Fruits and Vegetables High in Folate

Black-eyed peas	Asparagus
Lentils	Baked beans
Okra	Green peas
Kidney beans	Baked potato
Great Northern beans	Cabbage
Broccoli	Avocados
Iceberg lettuce	Peanuts
Beets	Romaine lettuce
Lima beans	Tomato Juice
Sunflower seeds	Orange juice
Spinach	Strawberries
Brussels sprouts	Oranges
Corn	Eggs
	Bananas

## What's New? Phonak's TVLink

Phonak has introduced TVLink which works together with the Phonak iCOM—a communication interface offering users the freedom of wireless connectivity. It connects the hearing system to the TV via Bluetooth.



Bluetooth is an open wireless technology standard for exchanging data over short distances (using short wavelength radio transmissions) from fixed and mobile devices.

The Phonak TVLink at a glance:

- Stereo sound.
- Short transmission delay ensures listening pleasure even for open fittings.
- Transmission range of up to 30 meters (approximately 98 feet) and allows freedom of movement without line of sight.
- Plug and play - easy one-step set-up.
- Easy volume adjustments via the Phonak TVLink base-station. The basestation doubles as a charging cradle for both the iCom and TVLink.

## Vehicle Donations Help CHSL

Donate your automobile, motorcycle or boat as a way to reach out and improve the lives of those less fortunate! The Center for Hearing, Speech and Language has partnered with Charitable Auto



Resources in a program enabling a vehicle donation to CHSL and a tax donation for the donor. CHSL will receive 70% of the net proceeds from sale of the vehicle at auction.

Your auto donation is fully tax deductible, and will make an amazing difference to someone in need! Arrangements will be made to pick up your car donation at no cost to you, and you will be supplied with the necessary paperwork to claim your tax deduction for your vehicle donation.

All you need is a clear title, and we'll take care of the rest, including pick-up, at no cost to you. Once your vehicle has been sold, you'll be sent a receipt for your tax records, and the sale proceeds will be donated to CHSL in your name.

## Good Vision, Hearing and Speech are Important for Optimal Learning and Growth

**K**idScreen offers hearing, vision, speech, language and learning screenings to identify potential communication and learning difficulties. KidScreen results are provided to parents and schools to encourage follow-up for assessment or treatment as needed.

Vision, hearing and speech screenings are not routinely available to all children through their child-care center or school. Children benefit from more

comprehensive screening and therapy services than typically takes place during well-child check-ups.

Our KidScreen program screens over 5,000 children a year in educational facilities located in Denver and Colorado Springs. We also offer screenings in our clinical office.



Children with learning-related vision problems rarely report symptoms. They think everyone sees the same as they do.

Early testing for vision problems is key to helping prevent learning difficulties. 25% of students in grades K-6 have visual problems that are serious enough to impede learning.



Children learn from listening to other people talk.

Good hearing helps children learn vocabulary, grammar, word order and other verbal communication.

**Did you know?**  
*Your purchase & donations help us fund our nonprofit work. We help those unable to pay.*



Children learn skills important for reading and writing during early speech and language development.

Screening can identify children who should receive further evaluation due to possible developmental delays.



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