

816-373-7900



2018 Spring Newsletter

Tragedy of Untreated Hearing Loss

Tragedy is occurring in our communities. Our neighbors in America who suffer from hearing loss do not get help. 78% of Americans with a hearing loss do not get treatment. How could this happen in the United States, which prides itself on the use of high technology and boasts of the greatest health care system in the world?



People who are hard of hearing are often reluctant to get help. It is hard to take that first step and admit needing help for hearing. Those with hearing loss need hearing aids and they also need help to learn how to use them. Once that is done, the majority of people find that their hearing aids turn their world on every day and let them connect with the people they love, hear music and the birds, and do their jobs. Without getting treatment for hearing loss their lives would be totally different and quite limited.

Hearing loss most often results from damage to nerves in the inner ear. This type of loss is called sensorineural. It is usually permanent and not treatable by medication or surgery. Hearing aids are the treatment of choice for people who have sensorineural (nerve) hearing loss and hearing aids provide substantial benefit in daily life for millions of Americans with this type of loss. Technology has improved enormously in recent years and hearing aids are very high tech! Unfortunately, however, many still go without treatment because of vanity, denial, unwillingness to make payment for hearing aids a priority, and non-acknowledgment of the true effects of hearing loss on themselves and their families.

The effect of untreated hearing loss takes a terrible toll on people's lives: missed conversations with a spouse, the lost punch line of a friend's joke, the embarrassment at misunderstanding your colleague's complement, the empty feeling when your sister says "never mind" instead of repeating, your family's avoidance of all but the most essential conversations with you because it's so much effort, missing that sweet "I love you" whispered by your child or grandchild. These things can add up to being left out, feeling not good about yourself, wanting to retreat, feeling sad and lonely, feeling anxious and insecure, losing your edge, and not being able to do your best.

Hearing loss is not normal-not for anyone, not even for older Americans. It's not just another of the inescapable indignities that people over 55 must endure for which there is no hope. There's help for hearing and if you have a hearing loss, treatment will make your life better. Take the steps you need to get help for hearing and save yourself from the isolation

and heartbreak of limited communication that results from hearing loss.

There is a cruel myth that untreated hearing loss is a harmless condition. Those with hearing loss may not bleed but they hurt plenty. And so do their families. When communication breaks down as a result of hearing loss the whole family suffers. People with hearing loss say, "I'm getting by." They may be, but often the family is not. Breakdowns in communication and the extra layer of effort on conversations day after day creates a strain on close relationships. Getting treatment will make your family's life easier and more pleasant. People who have a hearing loss also need to think about the well being of their families.

The good news is that treatment for hearing loss works! If you have a hearing loss, go get help, then pass the news on and encourage someone else to get help. With that approach that awful national statistic of 78% not getting help for hearing can be reduced.

Courtesy of Interactive Therapeutics, Inc.

References: Hearing Industries Association (HIA): Hearing Industries Association Statistical Report (2001). Washington, DC: HIA.

Kochkin, S. & Rogin, C. (January, 2000). Quantifying the Obvious: The impact of hearing instruments on quality of life, Hearing Review, 7(1), pp. 6-34

The Impact of Untreated Hearing Loss on Household Income

In a survey of more than 40,000 households utilizing the National Family Opinion



panel, hearing loss was shown to negatively impact household income on-average up to \$12,000 per year depending on the degree of hearing loss. However, the use of hearing instruments was shown to mitigate the effects of hearing loss by 50%. For America's 24 million hearing-impaired who do not use hearing instruments, the impact of untreated hearing loss is quantified to be in excess of \$100 billion annually. At a 15% tax bracket, the cost to society could be well in excess of \$18 billion due to unrealized taxes.

According to a recent national survey by the Better Hearing Institute, more than 31 million Americans in non-institutional settings admit to a hearing loss. Only 37% are at retirement age. The majority are either at school age or in the work force. Only 23% of hard-of-hearing Americans are being helped with hearing instruments, which are the necessary treatment for 90-95% of people with hearing loss.

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There is an extensive body of research concerning the impact of hearing loss on quality of life. When we talk of quality of life, healthy hearing per se is not just to enhance aesthetic pleasure of acoustic sounds in a person's environment.

Indeed, hearing loss has been shown to negatively impact nearly every dimension of the human experience including: physical health, emotional and mental health, perceptions of mental acuity, social skills, family relationships, self-esteem not to mention work and school performance.

In a recent review of the literature. Dr. Bridget Shield, Professor of Acoustics at London South Bank University, has shown that hearing loss is related to unemployment and underemployment. However, the majority of research clearly has focused primarily on people with severe to profound hearing loss. The literature is less clear on the impact of lower level of hearing loss and how they impact effectiveness in the workforce, though some recent studies indicate that minimal hearing loss is detrimental to the learning of language skills among children. In addition, while the link between hearing loss and employment has been established, for those receiving treatment for hearing loss, it is difficult discerning whether or not such treatment is associated with improvements in their economic prosperity.

To read the entire article, click on the Source Link below.



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We Would Love To Spotlight You

If any of YOU would like to be spotlighted in our Newsletters, please let us know! So many of you have had interesting lives. Traveled, written books, had incredible careers, lived in exotic places, served in the military, etc. We would just need to have your permission for us to post your story here. And of course we would like a picture of you as well!

Resources

[Multi-District School Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program](#)

1801 Vesper Blue Springs MO 64015
816-224-1300

[The Whole Person](#)

The Whole Person offers a broad range of services to individuals with disabilities to increase their ability to perform day-to-day activities and reduce the need of support from family members, professional attendants or other caregiving services.

[Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation](#)

Phone 573-751-3251
Toll Free 1-877-222-8963
Fax 1-573-751-1441
TDD 573-751-0881
info@vr.desse.mo.gov

[Missouri Assistive Technology \(Telephone Assistance Program\)](#)

Missouri's Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) provides equipment to qualifying individuals who have difficulties using the phone or internet because of a disability.

[Show Me Loans](#)

Loans can be applied for by Missourians with disabilities, family members, etc. for wheelchairs, electric scooters, hearing aids, computers, augmentative communication devices, electronic print enlarging devices and for other equipment made for people with disabilities. Loans may also be made for the costs of assistive technology services such as an evaluation or trainings to learn how to use a device.



Suggestions for Getting Best Results from Hearing Aids

Remember that adjusting to hearing aids is a process that takes some time. When you are fit for your new aids, that is your starting point. You haven't heard normally in a while, so please be patient with yourself.

Some environmental sounds may sound "funny" or different than you expected. *The more you wear your instruments, the more normal your world will sound. Be patient and continue to wear your instruments as much as possible.*

Hearing aids are just that... aids. This means that they will help improve your hearing, but they will not make it completely normal again. *Expect to hear better, but realize your hearing will not be perfect.*

Everyone filters out things they do not want to listen to (like noise). *When you first wear hearing aids, you must go through a period where your brain relearns the filtering process. As you adjust to your aids, you will find yourself focusing more on the things you want to hear and background noise will become less and less bothersome.*

The amount of time it takes to adjust to wearing hearing aids varies from person to person. Many people adjust in about 2 weeks. For others, it requires a lot longer. *Your participation in the process is crucial. You must be motivated to hear well, return for your follow-up visits and communicate with your audiologist so proper adjustments can be made if necessary.*

Your own voice may sound different; louder, booming, tinny or strange. Some of this will go away, some may not. *We can make modifications for this and some of it you will adapt to.*

When interacting in a group of people, or when there is background noise, remember that people with normal hearing don't understand 100% of the conversation in that environment. *The more you wear your hearing aids, the better you will do in these situations.*

When attending a meeting or a religious service, it is still a good idea to sit as close to the speaker as possible.

It is best to wear your aids as if they were your new ears. *Put them on when you get up in the morning and take them off at bedtime unless your audiologist directs you otherwise*

The more you wear them, the more you will benefit. Your benefit will be minimal if you put them in only when you want to hear. You are re-training the auditory part of the brain. *If you want good performance, it is necessary to provide the brain with as much auditory input as possible all day long. This includes when you are home alone. Keeping the aids in nourishes your brain and helps to keep it healthy.*

If you take a nap, of course you will remove them at that time. If you have worn them for 10-12 hours and your ears truly feel tired, then remove the aids and give your ears a little rest. *Sometimes you realize the need for rest if sounds or conversation are not sounding as clear as when you first put the aids in your ears.*

Everyone's hearing loss is unique. Some of your friends may wear hearing aids and may offer you advice based on their experiences. *It is best to follow your audiologist's recommendations for your particular situation. What is best for your neighbor may not be best for you.*

Please stay in touch. We never want you to be in any kind of pain resulting from your hearing aids. *If you are in pain, call before your follow-up appointment and we will assist you.*

Spring in Kansas City

Things to do / Spring in Kansas City



Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Championship March 7-10

Throng of fans flood the Power & Light District, decked out in a rainbow of colors, from burnt orange to Cyclone red and Jayhawk blue. Meanwhile, 10 teams face off inside Sprint Center in a showcase of athletic talent and competition that serves as a prelude to the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament. It's the Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Championship, one of the most exciting sporting events in Kansas City.

Through the Eyes of Picasso

The groundbreaking exhibition Through the Eyes of Picasso will explore Pablo Picasso's life-long fascination with African and Oceanic art, uniting his paintings and sculpture with art that had a seminal impact on his own creative exploration.

When

Recurring daily, March 5-April 8

Where

Region: Country Club Plaza Area
Address: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 4525 Oak St., Kansas City, MO, 64111
[Get Directions](#) Phone: [816-751-1278](#)

The Art of the Brick

THE ART OF THE BRICK, a captivating exhibition, featuring intriguing works of art made exclusively from one of the most recognizable toys in the world, the LEGO® brick, is set to make its debut at Union Station on January 25, 2018, in the Bank of America Gallery. Tickets are now on sale. The critically acclaimed collection of creative and inspiring pieces constructed using only LEGO bricks is created by world-renowned contemporary artist Nathan Sawaya. Designed to inspire ingenuity and creativity, THE ART OF THE BRICK is the world's largest and most elaborate display of LEGO art.

When

Recurring daily, March 5-May 29

Where

Region: Crown Center Area
Address: Union Station Kansas City, 30 W Pershing Rd., Kansas City, MO 64108
[Get Directions](#) Phone: [\(816\) 460-2020](#)
[Visit Website](#)

Click [here](#) and take a look at all there is to do and see!

Favorite Recipes

Mini Meatloaf Loaves A HUGE Favorite!



Yield: 9 to 10 balls (Serve 2-3 each)

Meatloaf

2 lbs ground beef
1 package of Ritz crackers (crumbled)
3/4 can evaporated milk
1 cup of shredded cheese
1 regular size package Lipton's Onion Soup
1 egg
1/2 large onion (optional)

Spices as desired

Topping

3 Tbsp mustard
3 Tbsp brown sugar
3/4 cup ketchup

Place all meatloaf ingredients in a large bowl and mix well with hands. Make into separate mini-loaves. Place loaves into a 13 x 9 and an 8 x 8 baking pan. There will be 9 to 10 loaves. Stir all topping ingredients in a small bowl. Pour large spoonfuls of sauce on each loaf. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 min to 1 hour. Loaves are done when inside temp is 160 degrees. After baked, top with fried onions if you like.

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