



Head Office

Dr Greg Butcher AuD
23 Queen Street
(PO Box 1500)
GRAFTON NSW 2460
Tel: (02) 6643 4044
1300 859 828

Email: admin@accenthearing.com.au

Spring Edition - 2024

Grafton - Glen Innes - Inverell

www.accenthearing.com.au

Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of Accent Hearing's Newsletter *The Listener*.



It can be much more difficult for younger, let alone older people to recognise the need to visit a hearing care professional. Part of that is due to the stigma associated with hearing loss and hearing devices. Much has been done to diminish this stigma, but it's still a work in progress.

A new study sheds light on why more young people don't seek hearing care. "A Study of Younger People's Perceptions of Hearing Care," reflects on how understanding what people currently think about hearing care could help increase interest and access for those who need it. People surveyed who already had hearing aids were happy with them and wished they had been fitted sooner. Perhaps more awareness of younger hearing aid users' positive experiences and quality of life improvement could help dispel the stigma associated with the devices.

And when other study participants were told of the links between delayed hearing care and dementia, many changed their minds and decided to get their hearing checked, trumping any stigma associated with hearing loss. As detailed in another article "Cognition, Audition, & Repeated Cognitive Screenings" the literature shows that untreated hearing loss tends to exacerbate cognitive decline in older, at-risk adults. So addressing hearing loss early and regularly visiting a hearing care professional throughout life could help prevent such issues down the line.

Hearing loss increases risk of incident cognitive impairment, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The Risk of dementia increases by 16 % for each 10-decibel worsening of hearing. The impact of hearing loss on dementia does not vary across dementia subtypes or other moderators.

Source: *A Study of Younger People's Perceptions of Hearing Care: An Interview with Stephanie Czuhajewski, MPH. Hearing Review. 2024;31(6):16-19. Hamilton-Basich M, Still Fighting Hearing Loss Stigma. Hearing Review. 2024;31(6):06-07.*

Konnekt Captioning Videophone

An easy phone for people of all ages who have deafness, impaired hearing, or are hard of hearing.

- ◆ Captions. Fast, private, accurate.
- ◆ Multiple languages.
- ◆ Loud, clear sound.
- ◆ Hands-free, or holding a traditional handset.
- ◆ Read lips and facial expressions using optional video calling.
- ◆ **Auto Answer Option**—Can't answer? Hearing? Fall? Emergency? Carers can check in with 2-way video & sound. End the worry!
- ◆ **Huge Buttons and extra loud**—For shaky hands, low vision, hard-of-hearing. Restore independence!
- ◆ **No computer skills required**—No logins, passwords, icons or menus. Personalised contacts, buttons, text sizes, colours, language. Konnekt does all setup and later changes for you without a visit.

Government assistance available from as little as \$5-\$10 a month through Konnekt. Ask reception for a Brochure.







Battery Tip!

Extend the life of your batteries by up to one day by leaving out for 1-2 minutes after removing the coloured tab, before inserting into the hearing aid!

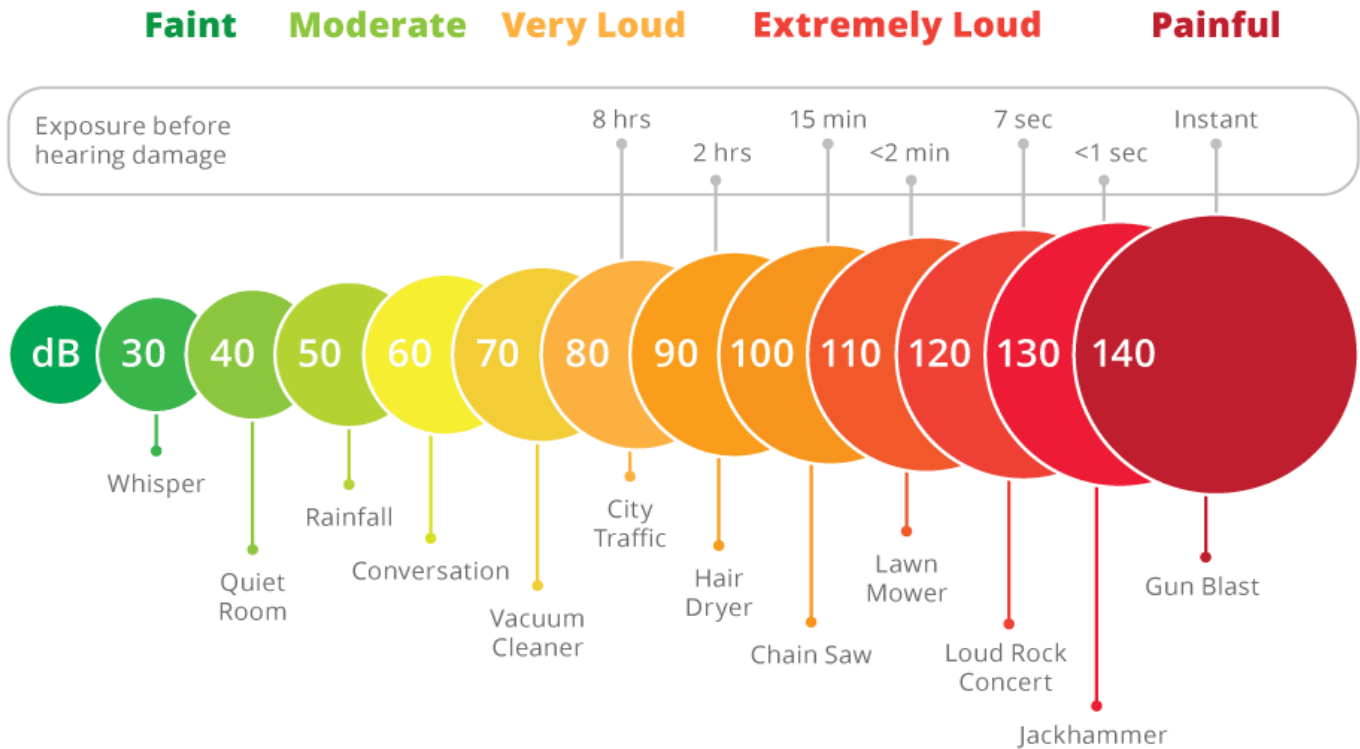
HEARING AID BATTERY

Types and sizes

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Size 10 | Size 13 | Size 312 | Size 675 |
| Average Lifespan 3-7 Days | Average Lifespan 6-14 Days | Average Lifespan 3-10 Days | Average Lifespan 9-20 Days |

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF NOT WEARING HEARING PROTECTION?

How many times have you seen people going about their usual gardening habits, using push petrol motor or ride-on lawn mowers without the use of hearing protection? Some don't even wear eye protection! The air blowers that suck up leaves or blow grass cuttings away are just as noisy and can leave you with a noise induced hearing loss over many years. The chart below shows you an average noise level calculation of what your ears can tolerate within a certain amount of time before hearing loss can occur.



For instance, a level at 80-85 decibels (dB - a decibel is a logarithmic way to express sound intensity or loudness) allows us to work in a noisy environment, i.e. a working factory with machinery, at this level for approximately 8 hours, before doing any damage to the tiny little hair cells in our cochlea (see picture below). Even a hair dryer producing 90 dB's, reduces the time significantly down to 2 hours of usage before damage occurs. Further across the chart above, a lawn mower shows us that damage to the cochlea will occur in less than 2 minutes of use! Once these hair cells are damaged, they cannot be repaired and you may be hearing, however, not understanding what is being said, due to generally losing the higher parts or the 'clarity' of speech.

This is why hearing protection is most important with the use of loud machinery and the wearing of ear muffs or ear plugs. These are relatively cheap items to buy to have hanging around the lawn mower handle before you start them up (and not hanging up on the shed wall well away from the device you are using, as you will not be inclined to walk over and retrieve them).

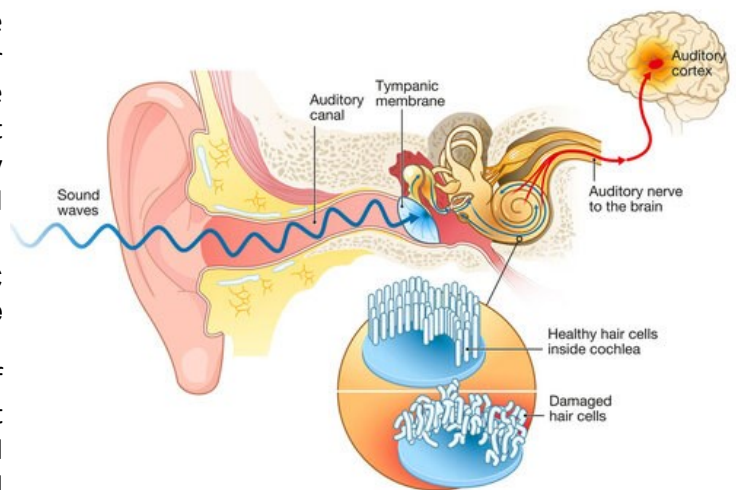


3M Peltor Earmuffs SLC 34dB-Class5. Now Available from Accent Hearing.

There are a selection of ear muff models you can now buy that allow for the wearing of broad rimmed hats, as with the standard

models, you can't wear them with large hats. Even if you

have hearing loss already, having worked in noisy environments over your life time without hearing protection, you can still do something about it and start wearing ear muffs to prevent it from getting any worse. A full hearing assessment will help you assess where you are with your current hearing thresholds.



Tips for Preventing Lost Hearing Aids

Losing a hearing aid can be an anxiety-inducing event, especially when you rely on it daily for clear communication. Here are some tips to keep your hearing aids safe and sound.

1. Always Use the Case or Charger

The simplest way to avoid misplacing your hearing aids is to consistently store them in their charging case. This not only keeps them safe but ensures they are charged and ready when you need them (see back page).

2. Be Careful When Undressing

Clothing can often snag hearing aids and fling them far from safety. Jo recalls a costly incident involving a camera strap and a river. To avoid similar mishaps, always double-check your hearing aids when removing items worn around your head or neck.

3. Keep Away from Pets and Children

Both curious pets and children might see hearing aids as intriguing toys. Keep them out of reach to avoid damage.

4. Ensure Proper Fit

A well-fitting hearing aid is less likely to fall out and become lost. If yours feels loose, consult your hearing care provider for a better fit. Sport locks or custom moulds can provide additional security, particularly useful for active individuals or those with uniquely shaped ears.

5. Choose Bright Colours

Opting for a brightly coloured hearing aid or earmould can make it easier to spot if it falls out.

6. Use Retention Clips

For those leading an active lifestyle or children, retention clips or devices can secure hearing aids to clothing, reducing the risk of loss.

7. Track with Technology

Technology like Apple's AirTag can be attached to hearing aid clips, helping to locate them if they go missing.

8. Label Everything in the Hospital

Use a brightly coloured container with clear labels to store your hearing aids during hospital stays. This simple measure can prevent them from being misplaced or accidentally discarded.

9. Establish Care Routines

For caregivers, establishing a routine for handling a loved one's hearing aids can prevent losses. Regularly placing the devices in marked containers can help maintain their safety and ensure they are easily found.



Our local Clarence Valley Orchestra & Chorus (CVOC) conducted by our Audiologist Dr Greg Butcher, has partnered up with the University of Wollongong (UOW) and is raising funds for the second year in a row for the **Clarence Valley Orchestra Medical Student Scholarship**. The regional program has been running in the Valley for a number of years now which attracts students in the Doctor of Medicine Program, to come and work in the Clarence Valley with the view of them returning as a permanent GP. Given the fact that there is a GP shortage in most rural areas, this is something we hope the Valley will get behind and support. This is outside the usual CVOC Music Scholarships open to all CVOC members annually. Your ticket will be enough to support this project, however for larger donations, a special fundraising box will be at CVO's next performance 'An Afternoon at The Pops' - The Weird & Wonderful at the Saraton Theatre, Sunday 27th October. This will feature the TV comedy trio The Kransky Sisters and Compere Comedian Anthony Ackroyd.

Tickets have been on sale for a few months now, so scan the QR code with your mobile here for more details before tickets sell out. We look forward to seeing you there.



Have you ever lost your hearing aids in hospital or when travelling?



Accent Hearing has designed a special zip-up bag to place your hearing aids in, 'before' you get wheeled off for any surgery or further testing if you are going into hospital.

These bags are easily identifiable with a place to write your name with a black permanent marker, so that family, staff and yourself will recognize what's in the bag immediately when looking for them. Sometimes hearing aids are left loose in bed side drawers or on the overbed table, and due to contamination issues, are accidentally whisked up and thrown out with other food containers, tissues or rubbish etc. You can also use the bag when travelling overseas or for use in the caravan. **The bags are available for sale at \$20.00 each. Please ask at reception.**

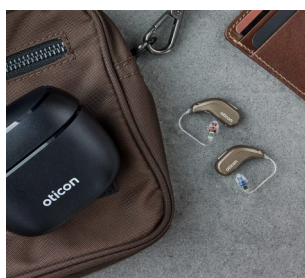
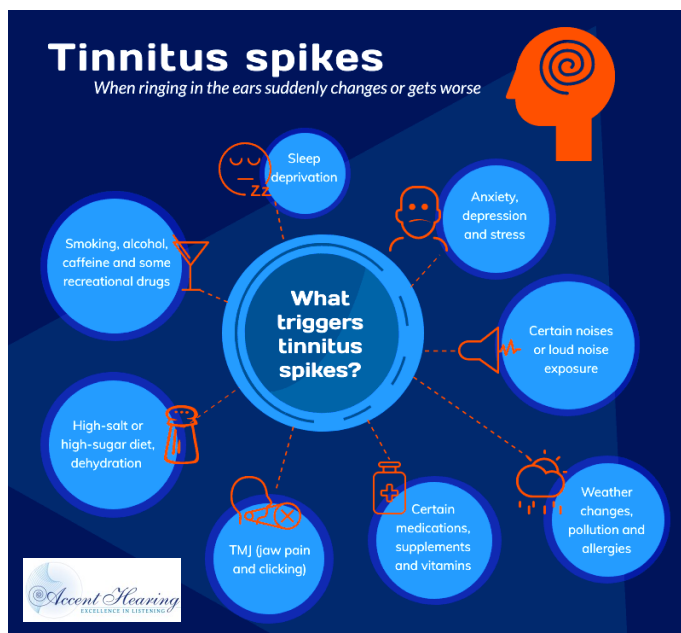
Audiologists upskill at the largest Sound Exchange in History

Recently, our Audiologist Greg attended an educational workshop at an Audiology Australia Conference in Melbourne. The 3 day conference was packed with the latest research in hearing rehabilitation care and other related hearing issues, working with many international speakers, along with other Audiologists from all over Australia.



Government Hearing Services Program Battery & Maintenance!

When paying your Agreement contribution fee by **bank transfer**, please add your name in the description, otherwise we will not be able to allocate your payment.



New portable charger recharges your hearing aids on the go using its built-in power bank, or while connected to a power source.

The protective lid keeps your hearing aids safe, and magnets help you place them easily and securely. This new charger is designed for Oticon Intent™ miniRITE hearing aids using advanced contact charging technology.



Accent Hearing Clinics - 1300 859 828

- **GRAFTON** | 23 Queen Street, Grafton NSW.
- **GLEN INNES** | Glen Innes Chiropractic Centre, 113 Meade Street, Glen Innes NSW.
- **INVERELL** | Inverell Hospital - Community Health, 41 Swanbrook Road, Inverell NSW.

Accent Hearing is independent and is locally owned. Our clinician Dr Greg Butcher is a University trained Doctor of Audiology; a fully Accredited Member of Audiology Australia; Vice President of Independent Audiologists Australia; and a qualified Medicare Hearing Services Provider.