



Accent Hearing
EXCELLENCE IN LISTENING



The Listener



Head Office

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

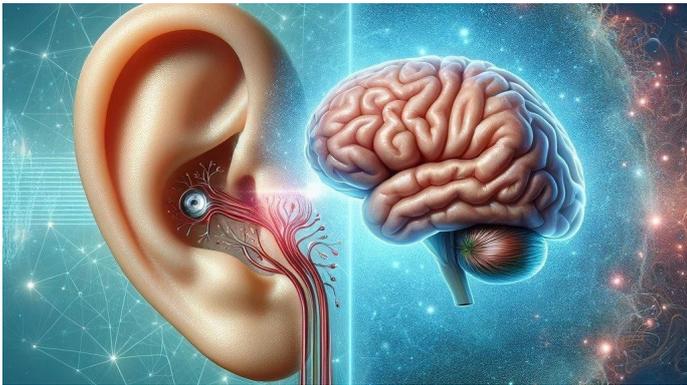
Email: admin@accenthearing.com.au

Autumn Edition - 2025

Grafton - Glen Innes - Inverell

www.accenthearing.com.au

Welcome to the Autumn 2025 edition of Accent Hearing's Newsletter *The Listener*.



Hearing Health:

A Gateway to Cognitive Longevity: Understanding the Overlap Between Hearing and Cognitive Health

Our ability to hear and process sound is deeply intertwined with our cognitive health. Research consistently shows that untreated hearing loss is a significant contributor to cognitive decline. Addressing hearing issues can dramatically enhance cognitive resilience and is why hearing health serves as a gateway to cognitive longevity, emphasizing proactive strategies to maintain both.

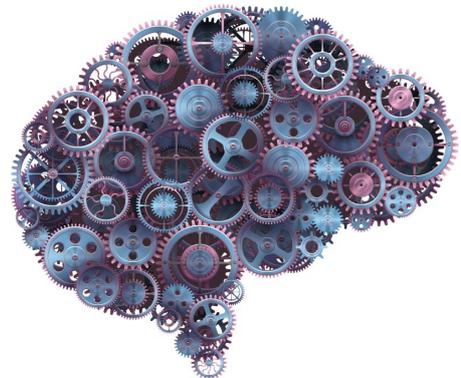
Hearing loss imposes a double burden on the brain. Firstly, it reduces the auditory input essential for cognitive stimulation, which may lead to structural and functional brain changes. Secondly, it forces the brain to work harder to decode incomplete or distorted sounds, creating cognitive overload. This dual impact accelerates cognitive wear and tear, potentially paving the way for conditions like dementia. Social isolation compounds this issue. Difficulty in hearing can make conversations challenging, leading to withdrawal from social interactions. This isolation increases the risk of depression, another factor linked to cognitive decline. By treating hearing loss early, individuals can mitigate these cascading effects, preserving brain health and overall well-being.

Evidence also suggests that early intervention through hearing aids or cochlear implants, can significantly reduce this risk. By restoring auditory input, these devices help the brain maintain its natural auditory processing capabilities, alleviating cognitive strain and preserving mental sharpness. By restoring auditory input, these devices help the brain maintain its natural auditory processing capabilities, alleviating cognitive strain and preserving mental sharpness.

Practical Steps for Cognitive Longevity

Annual Hearing Screenings: Early detection is critical. Schedule regular hearing assessments, especially if you are over 50.

- **Use of Hearing Devices:** *If diagnosed with hearing loss, adopt hearing aids or other assistive technologies promptly to support cognitive health.*
- **Stay Socially Engaged:** *Maintain active participation in social activities to counter isolation and its negative cognitive effects.*
- **Holistic Brain Health Practices:** *Pair auditory interventions with brain-stimulating activities like puzzles, reading and physical exercise.*



Protecting hearing health is more than an auditory concern—it is a vital component of aging well and safeguarding cognitive function. Address hearing loss proactively to unlock the potential for a long, vibrant and mentally active life.

What's the connection between Diabetes & Hearing Loss ?

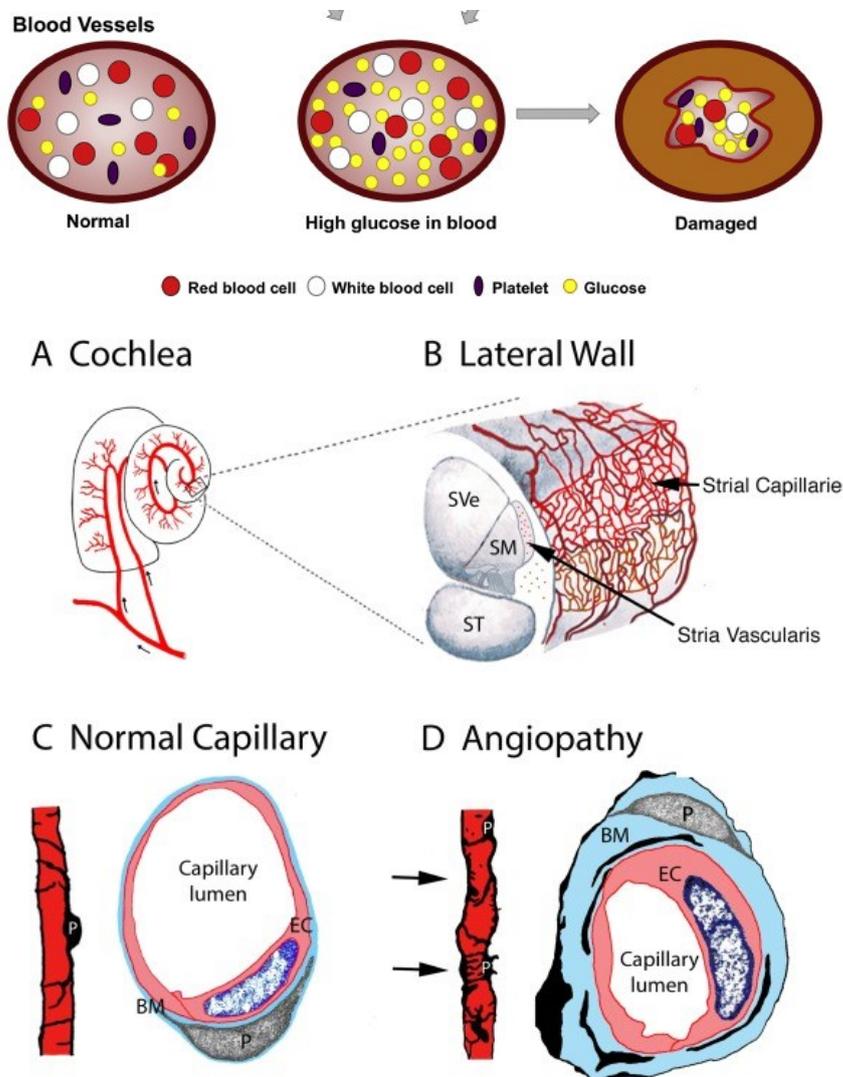
HEARING LOSS IS **TWICE AS COMMON** IN PEOPLE WITH DIABETES COMPARED TO THOSE WITHOUT.

Several cross-sectional and longitudinal studies have proven that both type 1 & 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T1DM/T2DM) is associated with hearing impairment. Hearing impairment is an independent risk factor for dementia, social withdrawal, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, functional decline and falls. Although hearing impairment is common, 30% of individuals with hearing aids do not use them regularly and up to 75% of adults who could benefit from hearing aids do not even acquire hearing aids! Overall, diabetes was associated with a doubling in the odds of developing a hearing impairment. The meta-analysis found that the risk was higher for younger adults or hospital-based patients.

In both types of diabetes, there is an excess of glucose in the blood, which can ultimately lead to the buildup of fatty material and cause the blood vessels to narrow. High blood glucose levels result in diabetic angiopathy and neuropathy.

On the right shows a schematic of a cochlea turn highlighting the blood vessels supply within the stria vascularis, the organ of Corti (hearing), and the spiral ganglion. The disease of the blood vessels caused by T1DM and T2DM damages the small blood vessels within the stria vascularis and the modiolar artery (the terminal artery in the cochlea which plays a major role in the control of cochlear blood flow) within the modiolus region leading to Sensorineural Hearing Loss (SNHL).

SM: Scala Media; ST: Scala Tympani; SV: Scala Vestibuli.



(A) Diagram of the cochlea with arterial supply, with a box around the area shown in (B). (B) This drawing of the lateral wall shows the rich capillary bed to the stria vascularis (arrow). The stria vascularis lies on the lateral wall of the scala media (SM) where there is a high oxygen demand for the energy-dependent ion pumps that keep K⁺ (Potassium) levels in the endolymph fluid high in the cochlea. The SM contains the sensory organ of Corti and is flanked by the scala vestibuli (SVe) above and the scala tympani (ST) below. (C) A cross-sectional view of a normal strial capillary. The lumen (space in the tube or cavity) is surrounded by the endothelial cell (EC, reddish), the basement membrane (BM, blue) that prevents proteins from leaking out, and a pericyte (P, black) that maintains tension on the capillary. Note the smooth longitudinal trajectory of the capillary on the left. (D) A cross-section through a pathologic capillary. A thickened capillary wall (EC and BM) reduces the lumen. Pericytes further constrict the lumen (arrows).

The thickened walls reduce oxygen and nutrient delivery, contributing to a lowering of the endocochlear potential (and inner ear sensitivity), which helps convert sound waves into electrical signals; a process most essential for hearing.

Associations between diabetes mellitus and sensorineural hearing loss from humans and animal studies. *Hearing Research*, Volume 450, 1 September 2024, 109072. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378595524001254>.
Diabetes mellitus and hearing loss: A review. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.arr.2021.101423>



Now that we've got your attention....

Nike's iconic slogan of **'Just Do it'** exudes confidence and conveys that you don't have to be a world-class athlete to succeed, as **You just do it!**



On the other hand, Burger King has the slogan **'Have it Your Way'** by highlighting a key aspect of their brand that sets them apart from the competition. They were the first to include meal customization and lets customers have food their way, via flexibility with order combinations and customizations.



An IT and telecommunications services to government and business customers in Australia is Verizon Australia with the slogan **'Can you hear me now?'**

Some adults could possibly relate to these slogans in regards to their hearing, a scenario that one partner saying to the person with possible hearing loss (who is reluctant to have a hearing assessment), **'Just Do It'** and the partner turning around shouting, **'Can you hear me now'**, with them not realizing they are the one with the hearing loss, with the reply from the first partner saying, OK **'Have it Your Way'**.

Does this sound familiar?

At Accent Hearing, we believe we have heard all the stories of why people don't get their hearing assessed properly ranging from the following:

I'm not old enough...

I'll get to it one day...

I don't like the look of hearing aids...

I don't want people to see me as 'old'...

Hearing aids cost too much...

I can hear alright...

I don't need hearing aids...

Hearing aids don't work and are too ugly...

Hearing aids are too much hassle...

I'm too old...

You don't have to deal with the excuses by yourself. Everyone has their own reasons for putting off or denying that they need hearing help. Underlying most of these excuses is a general anxiety about the "new normal" of living life differently. Based on the data gathered from a hearing evaluation, an Audiologist can guide you through the options available and answer the questions you may have about the experience. It's the best way to confront objections and excuses. It's the right way to begin your shared journey to better hearing and better health.



Why does seeing an 'Independent' Audiologist first, matter?

No matter where you are in your hearing journey, seeing an 'Independent Audiologist' first is much more important than being cold called or bribed into a 'free hearing screen' and then being fitted with hearing aids you may have been coaxed into putting money towards if a pensioner and not knowing how to work, becoming another 'sales target' with a larger hearing chain. This happens frequently and is why Accent Hearing receives many second opinions and advice.

- ◆ Accent Hearing is accredited to supply & fit subsidised Government hearing devices. However fees charged to private clients (who are not on a pension) do not include any sales based commission or staff bonus for device sales, paid as an incentive to staff to make specific recommendations or to any other third party for directing patients to the clinic.
- ◆ We are a preferred referral source for GPs and Ear Nose & Throat Specialists (ENTs) in the area and have a great reputation with them.
- ◆ We have a University Doctorate level Audiologist on staff (a lot of hearing clinics have TAFE certified providers which you won't know unless you ask).
- ◆ We are involved in the community, mostly as the main sponsor of the Clarence Valley Orchestra & Chorus, who has donated over \$100,000 to local charities in the past 10 years.
- ◆ If you are not on an Australian Government Pension and looking for a 'cheap fix' only wearing the devices occasionally, Accent Hearing may not be for you. We provide tailored rehabilitation plans and maintenance programs to suit each individual and you are not treated as another number. You pay for what you get - 'cheap & quality service' do not go together in the same sentence.
- ◆ No 'shifty locked-in payment schemes', sharing your information to third parties.
- ◆ Not being accosted or persuaded into a 'Free Hearing Test', whether in-person or from telephone 'cold calling' from another state (this is not our style, as this is just a ploy to get you into the clinic with bigger organisations).

Coffee doesn't always taste the same....



Hearing Aids from \$11,400

- COFFEE ON THE WAY TO YOUR APPOINTMENT \$6.50
- HEARING AIDS & REHABILITATION PLAN \$5,500.00
- REDISCOVERING RESTAURANTS WITH FRIENDS \$98.00
- AN ICE CREAM WITH THE GRANDCHILDREN \$23.00
- YOUR NEW FOUND LOVE FOR THEATRE \$250.00
- BOOKING THAT 'DREAM VACATION' TO EUROPE \$5,410.00
- WINE & CHEESE OVERLOOKING THE EIFFEL TOWER \$27.50
- RECONNECTING WITH AN OLD FRIEND OVER WINE \$85.00
- QUALITY TIME WITH PEOPLE THAT MATTER \$0.00
- FEELING LIKE YOUR YOUNG SELF AGAIN \$0.00
- SUPPORTING YOUR OVERALL HEALTH & WELLNESS \$0.00
- FALLING BACK IN LOVE WITH MUSIC \$0.00

Better hearing doesn't just improve your hearing. It improves your life!

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The **Clarence Valley Orchestra's** next concert will include a tribute to the entertainers and radio legends of the 'Concert Parties' who performed during WWI & WWII, in the effort to boost the troops' morale. Hear WW2 singalong medleys to the songs of Vera Lynn, to the Big Band sounds of



Glen Miller and the Andrews Sisters. Guest artists include vocalist Maggie Britton as 'Vera Lynn', Troy Castle & Connor Willmore as 'Flanagan & Allen', along with vocalist Lisa Butcher and the Coffs Coast Pipes & Drums.

Scan QR code above for tickets, or search www.events.humanitix.com@clarencevalleyorchestra

Did You Know..

That if you are familiar with most of the words to 'Rhinestone Cowboy', popularized in the mid-70's by American country music singer Glen Campbell, or 'I'm a Believer' by the fabulous band, The Monkees, you should be having your hearing checked regularly!

10 things that can make tinnitus worse:

1. Exposure to loud noises such as machinery or industrial noises
2. Exposure to loud music
3. Inner ear problems
4. Aging & gradual hearing loss
5. Some medications such as aspirin
6. Certain medical conditions (eg. High blood pressure and vascular problems)
7. Diet factors (e.g. high salt intake, alcohol consumption, dehydration)
8. Stress and anxiety (e.g. traumatic events such as the death of a loved one or changes at work)
9. Excessive strain on the jaw joint
10. Blocked ears with ear wax



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 and Independent Audiologists Australia; and a qualified Medicare Hearing Services Provider.