



Tampa Bay ENT

Adult and Pediatric Ear, Nose and Throat • Facial Plastic Surgery

Hearing Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is an audiologist?

- A. An audiologist is a professional who diagnoses, treats, and manages individuals with hearing loss or balance problems. Audiologists have received a master's or doctoral degree from an accredited university graduate program. Their academic and clinical training provides the foundation for patient management from birth through adulthood. Audiologists determine appropriate patient treatment of hearing and balance problems by combining a complete history with a variety of specialized auditory and vestibular assessments. Based upon the diagnosis, the audiologist presents a variety of treatment options to patients with hearing impairment or balance problems. Audiologists dispense and fit hearing aids as part of a comprehensive habilitative program. Audiologists may be found working in medical centers and hospitals, private practice settings, schools, government health facilities and agencies, as well as colleges and universities. As a primary hearing health provider, audiologists refer patients to physicians when the hearing or balance problem requires medical or surgical evaluation or treatment.
Definition from the American Academy of Audiology

Q. What can I expect when I have my hearing tested? (Adult)

- A. The hearing test is an assessment of the lowest level you can hear. For the test you will be seated in a sound treated room and asked to respond when you hear a sound, typically beeps. You will also be asked listen to and repeat words at low as well as comfortable levels. These tests are to determine the lowest level of speech you can hear and how well you understand speech at a comfortable listening level for you.

Q. What can I expect when my child's hearing is tested?

- A. Depending upon your child development, age appropriate evaluation will be conducted.
- VRA
 - OAE
 - CPA



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Q. What are different types of hearing loss?

A. A **sensori-neural hearing loss** is permanent damage to the hair cells in your inner ear. This type of hearing loss is permanent and can only be treated with hearing aids. The exact cause of sensori-neural hearing loss cannot be determined. However, causes of sensori-neural hearing loss could be noise exposure, hereditary, cancer treatments, or a growth in the inner ear.

A **conductive hearing loss** is when sound is not conducted properly into the inner ear. Causes of a conductive loss could be a middle ear infection (such as fluid behind the ear drum), a growth behind the ear drum, disarticulation of the bones behind your ear drum, a hole in the ear drum, swimmers ear (swelling of the ear canal), or any disfiguration of the outer ear. This type of hearing loss can be reversible since the nerve portion of the hearing is not damaged. Assessment of the conductive loss is done by the audiologist and treatment for a conductive hearing loss will be discussed with the ear nose and throat physician.

A **mixed hearing loss** is a combination of a conductive hearing loss and a sensori-neural hearing loss.

Q. How do I know if I need a hearing aid?

A. First and foremost a hearing test is needed to determine if a hearing aid is needed. If a hearing loss is present then hearing aids will be discussed.

When considering whether or not you are ready for a hearing aid ask yourself these following questions:

1. Do you find that you are missing parts of conversation?
2. Do you find yourself purposely avoiding conversations because you are embarrassed that you may not hear or understand what the person is saying?
3. Do you keep the TV at a level that the rest of the family finds uncomfortable?



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4. Do you have trouble understanding others in background noise?

If you answered yes to more than one of these questions there is a good chance you have a hearing loss and hearing aids or assisted listening devices may need to be considered. Life is too important to miss. Social interactions are very important for our well being and happiness. If your hearing loss is keeping you from interacting with your family and friends you owe it to yourself and your family to try a pair of hearing aids.

Q. Are hearing aids covered by insurance?

A. Hearing aids are can be expensive and unfortunately they are not covered by insurance companies. Some insurance companies may provide a small stipend towards hearing aids, however here at Tampa Bay ENT & Cosmetic Surgery we will not bill your insurance company. We would provide you a bill of your hearing aids and then you would place a claim with the insurance company.