

Did you know ?

- Approximately **36 million** Americans have some degree of hearing loss, ranging from mild to severe
- **10 million** Americans have suffered irreversible noise-induced hearing loss, and **30 million** more are exposed to dangerous noise levels each day
- Approximately **31%** of people over age 65 have hearing loss and 40 to **50%** of people 75 and older have hearing loss
- Only **1 out of 5** people who could benefit from a hearing aid actually wears one

Compiled from fact sheets produced by the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD).



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HEARING LOSS: TALKING WITH A LOVED ONE

*How to help those you care
about get the help they need.*





YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Hearing loss doesn't just affect the person who has it. It also affects spouses, family members and friends. From frustration with having to repeat things over and over to heartbreak at seeing someone you care about isolate themselves from the people and activities they love, the negative effects of hearing loss cast a wide net.

Convincing a loved one to seek help is the right thing to do, but is not always easy. This brochure provides some dos and don'ts to help you approach this important subject.

SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE

Left untreated, hearing loss can affect a person's quality of life in many ways. Yet without even realizing it, you may be making it easier for someone not to seek help.

Well-intentioned efforts such as repeating yourself or "translating" what others are saying may be preventing your loved one from realizing how much communication they fail to understand or miss completely.

What you can do

- *Talk to your friend about their hearing concerns*
- *Gently remind them of their loss every time you "translate" or repeat something for them*
- *Recommend they visit a hearing professional or web sites like Hearing-Aid.com to do more research and get their questions answered*
- *Offer to schedule and attend a hearing consultation with them*
- *Remind them they have nothing to lose and potentially everything to gain by seeing a hearing professional*

DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU GET RESISTANCE

Unlike eyesight, when hearing goes, people are in less of a hurry to do something about it – with many waiting five to seven years before finally seeking treatment. Be prepared for pushback with these responses.

// *My family doctor would have told me if I have hearing loss.*

Not true – less than 20% of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss during physicals.

// *Wearing a hearing aid will make my hearing loss obvious.*

Today's hearing aids are sleek and stylish or even invisible and certainly less noticeable than if you constantly ask people to repeat themselves, inappropriately respond, or don't respond at all.

// *A little hearing loss is no big deal.*

The fact is, studies have linked untreated hearing loss to big deals like stress, depression, social rejection, increased risk to personal safety, reduced earning power and more.¹

¹betterhearing.org

For more ideas on how to help, talk to your hearing healthcare professional.