

Helping Your Older Loved Ones Navigate Hearing Loss

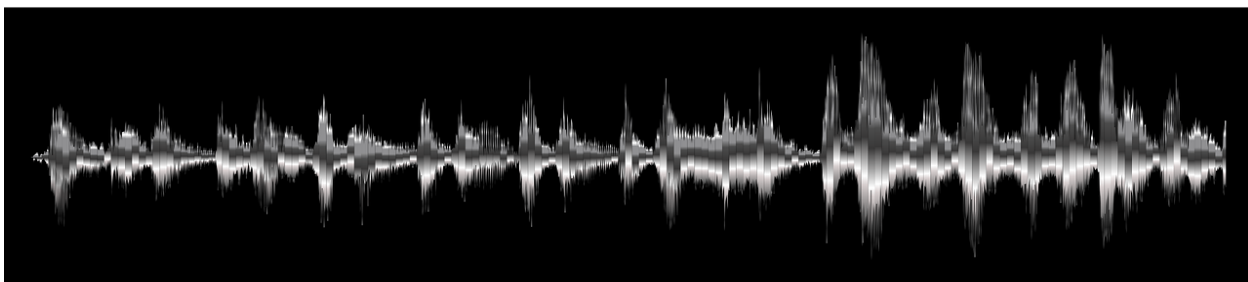
Description

As we get older, life becomes more challenging for a whole host of reasons. It could be mobility or the loss of loved ones, after retirement, many people have difficulties adjusting to their new life without a sense of purpose or belonging and these issues can result in feelings of isolation or depression.

Certainly, as we move through different stages of life, the challenges are different – but this doesn't have to mean that the challenges are negative or debilitating. Life is for living and different phases of our natural evolution also offer us the chance to experience richer, fuller lives armed with a diversity of life experiences and skills.

Now, one of the most important challenges that many of us will face is experiencing the issues that age brings with it, and often this means, hearing loss. If you're concerned that you might be [showing signs of hearing loss](#), then you should take action as soon as possible. Early diagnosis is key and as the adage goes, *prevention is better than cure*, so the earlier you see an audiologist the more options you'll have at your disposal to address any issues.

However, when we start to see these signs in our older relatives and loved ones, it's important that we understand the challenges they're going to be facing and how we can support them constructively and lovingly, and most importantly, with empathy. This is especially true if they've never had hearing issues before and are facing a new reality, which could be causing feelings of anxiety and stress.



So, we're going to look at a few ways that you can recognize signs of hearing loss in older relatives and what you can do to make their lives a little easier.

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COMMON SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS

The first step to finding help for your relatives and loved ones is to recognize when things are not going exactly to plan with their hearing, and while some signs are more obvious it is likely that at the beginning phase of hearing loss, the clues are going to be less obvious.

You may notice that theyâ€™re having difficulty hearing other people clearly or that they misunderstand what youâ€™re saying to them, a scenario that can be more obvious in noisy places.

If they start to ask you to repeat yourself and this happens in greater frequency or if listening to music or watching the television needs a higher volume than normal, this is a sign of deteriorating hearing.

Missing telephone calls or not being able to hear the person on the other end, finding it difficult to keep up with conversations, and if you notice that they become stressed or tired after engaging in a conversation may well mean that it is time to get that audiologist check scheduled.

While these signs are common in most people, you also need to pay special attention to your Dad and older male relatives or loved ones because men are *far* less likely to speak up about hearing loss, just something to be aware of.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU NOTICE SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS

When you notice that your loved one is showing signs of hearing loss (and they have not said anything to you yet), itâ€™s important to proceed with sensitivity and understanding. Try to imagine yourself in their position and realize that this is one stage of life that weâ€™d all rather not have to experience. So empathy and patience are your two most important keywords.

The first thing youâ€™re going to do is have a conversation with them. Discuss your concerns and the reasons why youâ€™re worried, let them speak, and accept that this first interaction may not go exactly as you want it to, but patience is key and handling the situation delicately is a great departure point.

The next step is to schedule a hearing exam with an audiologist. Theyâ€™ll be able to ascertain the extent of damage and at what stage of hearing loss theyâ€™re at. Based on that assessment, theyâ€™ll also be able to recommend a treatment plan moving forward and offer advice on how best to cope with the current state of hearing loss.

Your audiologist will also recommend the appropriate devices if theyâ€™re necessary and this is also your cue to learn everything you can about those devices, how they operate what [hearing aid programming tips](#) youâ€™ll need to enjoy optimum levels of use and benefit from them.

The more *you* know, the better youâ€™ll be equipped to help your loved ones cope with this new change in their lives and it doesnâ€™t have to be all doom and gloom. People with hearing loss live rich, varied, and interesting lives, just like everyone else does.

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