

# ENT Treatment News

Spring 2012

## *Should I Buy an Instant-Fit Hearing Aid Sold Over the Internet? The Answer is No!*

**BROOKFIELD**—Some internet sellers are asking you to perform a hearing examination on yourself through your computer. In order to have an accurate hearing test, you need a sound proof booth, equipment that is calibrated yearly, a view of the ear to check for obstructions like wax, and an audiologist who is trained in performing the test who also decides which tests are necessary. You can imagine how a hearing test might turn out if your computer speakers are not functioning properly, if your air conditioner is running while completing the test or if you have a large plug of wax in your ear! It certainly would not be accurate; it might exaggerate your hearing loss or indicate that you have a loss when you really don't!

At our office, we have the added benefit of having Dr. Mary Milbrath (an ear, nose, & throat physician) here to diagnose medical problems

with your ears. Sometimes hearing loss can be medically treated by surgery or medication and patients do not need a hearing aid at all! On the other hand, some ear problems can be life threatening or the symptom of a serious underlying medical condition. This is a critical step that is missing if you "diagnose" your own hearing loss.

Ears come in all different shapes and sizes. Even on an individual, one ear can be very different from the other! Obviously, these instant fit hearing aids will not fit every ear. Fit is critical in directing amplified sound to your eardrum so you are hearing your best. There are several different tube lengths and eartip sizes for the new mini behind-the-ear styles. I am often changing these on patients due to retention in the ear or soreness. Who will be available to examine the fit of the hearing instrument if you purchase over the internet?

During the hearing aid fitting and follow-up visits, I teach you how to use your hearing device and counsel you on how to be a successful listener in different situations. I also tailor the hearing instrument settings to your listening preferences. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to insert the instrument in your ear and I spend time showing you how to accomplish this task. If you are having difficulty hearing something specific, I can set up a separate listening program or activate your volume control. These visits allow you to get any questions you may have answered by a professional face to face. I learn much better when I can see someone completing the task! At our office, these visits are free for as long as you own your hearing aids!

Remember you always get what you pay for! Certainly, getting a hearing aid through an audiologist will cost you more money, but it will be

worth it in the long run. There was a recent article published by the better hearing institute that found 8 out of 10 hearing aid users are satisfied with the changes that have occurred in their lives specifically due to their hearing aids. In addition, 82% would recommend hearing aids to their friends. I have found this to be true in my practice and I feel hearing aids are finally getting a more positive image. I worry these instant fit hearing aids will increase the negativity toward hearing aids because there will be many people who will be unsatisfied! This dissatisfaction will be blamed on the hearing aids. Please spread the word to family and friends or to anyone who is considering the purchase of hearing aids over the internet.

— Thanks!

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***Special Offer!***  
***Save Up To \$300 Off a Hearing Aid Purchase  
With a Free Hearing Screen!***

As a special offer to new clients I'm giving you the opportunity to receive a 10% discount on any new hearing aid package up to a maximum of \$300 with this coupon. This offer is for new clients only and not valid with other offers. This offer expires on May 12, 2012. To arrange for your free hearing screen please call my office today at 262-780-4444. Please mention this ad when you call and bring this coupon with you on your office visit.

## Check This Out!

Are you still having trouble understanding speech even with your hearing aids?  
Visit [www.sensesynergy.com/readmyquips](http://www.sensesynergy.com/readmyquips) for a fun way to retrain your brain.

### Is There Anything I Can Do To Prevent Hearing Loss?

Maybe! A recent study conducted at Vanderbilt and the University of Sydney revealed that Vitamins A & E reduced the prevalence of age-related hearing loss. The study looked at nearly 3,000 people ages 50 and up. After taking into account age, sex, smoking, education, noise exposure and other factors, an increase in Vitamin E intake reduced the likelihood of hearing loss by 14%. For Vitamin A, the risk of hearing loss was reduced by as much as 47%. It wouldn't hurt to add these supplements to your diet!

### Hearing Aid Tip:

Many patients have recently complained of their hearing aids performing intermittently. Nearly all of these patients were using Energizer batteries. I placed a call to Phonak and was informed that Energizer batteries are slightly thinner than other brands, so they were not making good electrical contact inside the hearing aid. Therefore, I am recommending that patients not use Energizer batteries in their hearing aids!

Check out our website:  
[www.enttreatmentcenter.com](http://www.enttreatmentcenter.com)

Ear, Nose, & Throat Treatment Center  
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Brookfield, WI 53045

**Information on:**  
• **Up To \$300 Savings Offer**  
• **Free Hearing Seminar**  
**Within This Issue!**

### Free Hearing Seminar!

The date for my next educational seminar is **Wednesday, April 25** from 10 to 11:00AM. It will be held at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital Auditorium. Ed Miller from Siemens Hearing will present information on hearing loss and new hearing instrument technology. A continental breakfast will be served. Directions to the Auditorium:

- Go to the back of the hospital by following the road to the north past the cancer center
- Park at the entrance labeled Auditorium
- Enter in the door labeled W5 and go right
- Auditorium located on right side of hallway (Room 142)

For more information call 262-780-4444.

### Communication Tip:

Are your friends or family members tired of repeating things for you? Help them out a little by not saying "What?" Instead, ask for repetition on only the part that you missed. Here's an example:

**Friend or Family Member:** "Would you like to go to the movies on Saturday?"

**You:** "What day did you want to go to the movies?"

**Friend or Family Member:** "Saturday."

\*\*Only 1 word had to be repeated instead of 10 words!