

# ENT Treatment News

☪ Fall 2015 ☪

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## I Purchased Hearing Instruments; How Do I Take Care of Them?

### BROOKFIELD —

The ear canal is moist and warm. It has a humidity level between 40-70% and a temperature of about 98 degrees. Earwax, which is composed of salt and body acid, can accumulate in the ear and in the hearing device. This environment is harmful to electronic components. Proper hearing aid care helps reduce malfunction and extend the life of the hearing instrument.

It is critical to remove earwax from your hearing aids on a daily basis. To do this, use the small brush that was provided at the time of purchase. Remember to brush the part of the hearing aid that goes down into the ear canal. When brushing, hold the hearing aid upside down so that wax particles fall

to the floor instead of deeper into the hearing instrument.

Hearing aids have a wax filter to help prevent wax from coming in contact with the speaker. The wax filter may get plugged with wax, which would cause the hearing aid to be dead. Follow the instructions on the wax filter packaging to replace the filter. This should be done whenever your hearing aid is not working well or at all. Some hearing aids have a dome at the tip that also protects the speaker. Those are most likely changed about every 1-3 months.

Do not use alcohol or other cleaning solvents to clean your hearing aids. These products can damage the hearing aid material. Use a dry soft cloth to clean the

device. Do not wear your hearing aids while swimming, showering or applying hair products/spray. If you accidentally get your hearing aids wet, remove the battery and let them dry naturally. You could also use a hair dryer on a cool air setting.

Try not to drop your hearing aids onto a hard surface. This may cause them to malfunction. It is important to work with your hearing devices over a table with a towel or other soft surface on top.

At night, store hearing instruments in a dry, safe place. If you are storing them in the case that was provided, please keep the case open so that the hearing aids can air out overnight. When your hearing aids are not in use, remember to

open the battery door to preserve battery life.

Hearing aid batteries should be stored at room temperature. They should not be carried loose in your pocket or purse. If a battery comes in contact with a metal object (coin, key, another battery), it may short out or leak. Batteries are poisonous, so please store them away from pets or children. Zinc-air batteries are air activated. Remember to remove the tab only when you are ready to use the battery. It is important to let the battery sit with the tab off for at least one minute to allow air to fully activate the battery. If your hearing aid is not working, please feel free to call me with questions or schedule an appointment for me to take a look at it.

### *Special Offer!*

*Save Up To \$500 Off a Hearing Aid Purchase With a Free Hearing Screen for New Clients!*

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 \$500 with this coupon. This offer is for new clients only and not valid with other offers. This offer expires on December 15, 2015. 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.

## *Happy Holidays! Give the gift of hearing this holiday season!*

### *Why should I get hearing aids sooner rather than later?*

Most people wait an average of 7-10 years before getting help for their hearing loss. When your brain doesn't hear certain sounds for a period of time, auditory deprivation can occur. The brain doesn't get the practice it needs and becomes less efficient in processing sound. This will affect how well you do with hearing aids in the future. It is difficult to adjust to hearing again and can be overwhelming. Loud sounds can be aggravating because you have lived in a quiet world for so long. Hearing in noise might be next to impossible because our auditory processing also slows as each year passes. Keep this in mind as you are trying to decide when to purchase your first set of hearing aids.

### *Hearing Loss Myth – I'll have some minor surgery and then my hearing will be OK*

You may know someone whose hearing improved after a medical or surgical treatment. It's true that some types of hearing loss can be medically treated. Some examples of this would be fluid in the middle ear space, otosclerosis, and hole in the eardrum. With adults, medical treatment is an option in only 5-10% of the cases.

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### *Persons Aged 40-50 Begin to Show Decline in Auditory Processing Abilities*

It is common for me to see middle aged persons coming into my office describing hearing loss in the presence of background noise. When I test their hearing, it is most often perfectly normal. Studies have shown that temporal processing ability declines in the early 40s age group. Temporal processing is the ability to follow rapid changes in speech, music or other sounds. This would make it harder to follow a conversation if someone were speaking rapidly or in the presence of a quickly changing listening environment. Middle-aged persons also may notice a decline in the ability to locate where a sound is coming from. People in this age group also struggle with auditory stream segregation. This is the ability to separate incoming sounds into distinct conversations and then focus on one of them. Lastly, there may be a reduction in the ability to store and retrieve information from working memory. In order to follow a conversation, a person needs to store

incoming words and integrate them with prior words in a sentence. Here are a few tips if you find you are struggling with these processing abilities:

- If possible, silence competing noise sources like the TV or radio.
- Position yourself so that you can optimally see and hear your conversation partner.
- Ask your conversation partner to speak more loudly and clearly.
- If possible, move to a less noisy location.

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