



have you
heard?



Amplifon Hearing Health Care Newsletter

Spring 2015

AMPLIFON HEARING HEALTH CARE

New name, same trusted source for hearing help

There's a new name in the world of hearing healthcare: Amplifon Hearing Health Care. And, while the name is new, the program is not. Amplifon Hearing Health Care, formerly known as HearPO, has been around for 20 years and has earned the trust of millions of people across the country.

The previous name, HearPO, may have changed, but the program remains the same in all other respects. In other words, you can count on Amplifon Hearing Health Care for access to the highest quality care for your hearing, along with competitive prices on brand-name hearing aids.

At Amplifon Hearing Health Care, we want to make it as easy as possible for hearing-impaired individuals to get the answers and help they need. We do this by matching them with the right providers and the appropriate hearing aid technology. We also stay with them every step of the way, from the initial phone call to the hearing aid fitting and aftercare.







So why did we change the name from HearPO to Amplifon Hearing Health Care? Amplifon, our parent company, is one of the most recognized and trusted names in hearing healthcare and has earned a strong reputation for helping people reconnect with life's most beautiful moments and memories. Our new name will perfectly complement our aim to bring the gift of good hearing to many more lives...perhaps even you or someone who's close to you.

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Who is Amplifon Hearing Health Care?

Amplifon Hearing Health Care is the largest provider of hearing healthcare benefits in the United States, covering more than 175 million lives. The Amplifon Hearing Health Care program features:

-  A nationwide network of nearly 4,000 hearing healthcare providers who've met our strict credentialing requirements
-  More than 2,000 hearing aid models from leading manufacturers
-  A low-price guarantee: If you find a lower price at another local provider, we'll gladly beat that price by 5%
-  A three-year warranty, including coverage for repairs, loss or damage
-  A 60-day no-risk trial period
-  Easy access to your hearing healthcare benefit — call Amplifon to activate today

Beyond the ears...

When your hearing is damaged by noise, your brain feels the effects.

Exposure to excessive noise has permanently damaged the hearing of estimated 26 million Americans between the ages of 20 and 69 according to the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. However, do not think this is simply a matter of losing your hearing. Noise-induced hearing loss may also affect your brain's ability to recognize speech sounds.

In a study conducted at the University of Texas at Dallas, two groups of laboratory rats were exposed to loud noise for an hour. One group experienced 115 decibels of high-frequency noise, which caused moderate hearing loss, while the other group was subjected to 124 decibels of low-frequency noise, resulting in severe hearing loss.

One month later, researchers measured "neuronal response" in the brain's auditory cortex, where most sound-processing occurs. In the group with a severe hearing loss, the neurons reacted to sound more slowly than normal, and the rats could not tell speech sounds apart in a behavioral task they could successfully complete before the hearing loss.

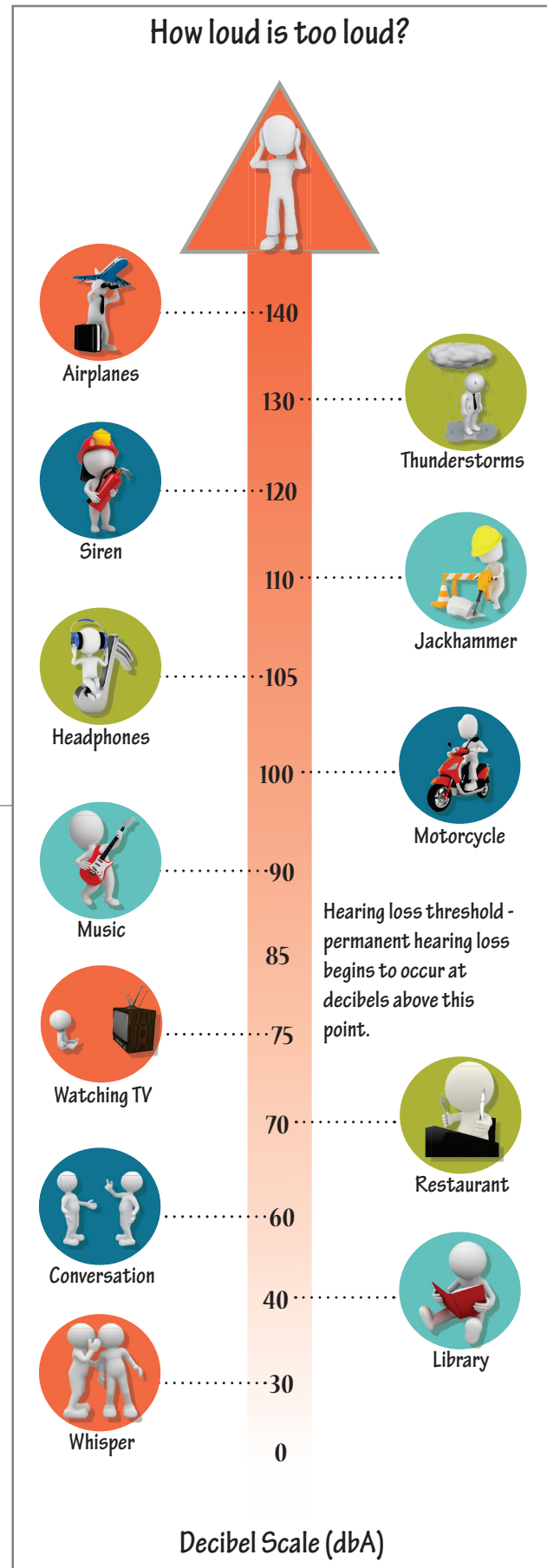
"Although the ear is critical to hearing, it is just the first step of many processing stages needed to hold a conversation," says Michael Kilgard, Ph.D., the study's coauthor. "We are beginning to understand how hearing damage alters the brain and makes it hard to process speech, especially in noisy environments."

One of the easiest health issues to prevent

Researchers have devoted enormous time and resources to the problem of noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL): how to prevent it and how to treat it. Despite their best efforts, damage to the sensory hair cells in your inner ear — the cause of most NIHL — remains irreversible. Fortunately, you can prevent NIHL by following a few easy steps:

- Understand that it doesn't take a big "kaboom" to harm your hearing. Even prolonged exposure to lower decibel (dB) levels, such as heavy city traffic (approximately 85 dB), can result in damage.
- Whenever possible, move away from dangerous noise.
- Wear hearing protection (i.e., earmuffs or earplugs) when engaged in a loud activity, such as shooting a gun, riding an ATV, mowing the lawn or attending concerts, sporting events or fireworks shows.
- Educate family and friends about the need to protect their hearing. Take special care with children, who may be too young to realize the dangers of noise.

Visit www.betterhearing.org for more tips on protecting yourself from NIHL. Also, if you suspect a hearing loss, call Amplifon Hearing Health Care to schedule a hearing test with a credentialed Amplifon Hearing Health Care provider.



Did you know?

Untreated hearing loss has far-reaching consequences

People say it all the time: “My hearing problem isn’t really that bad...I can get by just fine without hearing aids.” There’s just one problem with this statement: It defies compelling evidence to the contrary. Left untreated, even a mild hearing loss can negatively affect key areas of your life, including:

MENTAL HEALTH

Studies have linked untreated hearing loss to irritability, negativism, anger, stress and depression. A study by the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders found that moderate to severe depression occurred more often among people age 18 or older with a self-reported hearing loss (11.4%) versus those who had no hearing impairment (5.9%).

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Even a mild hearing loss makes you three times more likely to fall than someone with normal hearing, concluded a study led by Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Injuries from falls result in annual medical costs of \$20 billion, according to government reports — truly a national healthcare crisis.

INCOME

Working individuals sacrifice job performance and income if they do not hear well. Conversely, the use of hearing aids can reduce the risk of income loss by 90% to 100% for people with milder hearing losses and by 65% to 70% for those who have moderate losses, reports the Better Hearing Institute (BHI).



Better hearing = happier families



When a hearing loss goes untreated, family members, friends and coworkers are directly affected. A prime example: being forced to frequently repeat themselves. If the hearing loss is bad enough, the individual may rely on someone else, usually a spouse, to be his or her “ears.” In addition, hearing-impaired people often withdraw from social activities, which may deprive their loved ones of enjoying these activities, too.

That’s the bad news. The good news is this: There’s strong evidence that the appropriate treatment benefits not just those with a hearing loss, but everyone in their lives.

Several years ago, the non-profit Better Hearing Institute, in collaboration with the National Council on Aging, conducted a large-scale study in which hearing-impaired

individuals and family members were asked to report observed changes resulting from the use of hearing aids in 16 areas of their lives.

In 11 of 16 lifestyle areas, at least 50% of the hearing-impaired respondents and family members reported improvement. The top three areas of observed improvement were “relationships at home,” “feelings about self” and “life overall.” And here’s the really interesting part: In nearly every comparison, family members observed greater improvements in the respondents’ lives than the respondents themselves.

If you have a hearing problem, ask your loved ones to share with you how they’re affected. You may be surprised by their answers!

Would you know if you had a hearing loss?

Most people don't wake up one morning and think, "Hey, I have a hearing problem!" The fact is, a hearing loss typically comes on so gradually, it might not even be perceived by the person experiencing it. (Family members often are the first to notice.) You may have a hearing loss if any of the following apply to you:

Check the box for each statement that applies:

- 01** Turning up the volume of the TV excessively high
- 02** Responding inappropriately to questions
- 03** Reading lips or watching faces people's faces for visual cues
- 04** Struggling to hear conversation in restaurants and other noisy places
- 05** Thinking others are mumbling
- 06** Difficulty hearing on the phone
- 07** Frequently asking others to repeat themselves
- 08** Particular trouble understanding women and children

If you answered yes to the questions above, it's easy to confirm whether you have a hearing loss and whether it can be treated. Call us to schedule a hearing test with a credentialed Amplifon Hearing Health Care provider.

If you suspect a hearing loss, call Amplifon Hearing Health Care at 1.855.531.4694 today to schedule a hearing evaluation.



HEARING
HEALTH CARE