



Ask Your Audiologist

Q. *Does anyone like their hearing aids? It seems that everyone I know with hearing aids complains about them.*

My wife doesn't even hear me when she's in the next room.

A. Hmm...sounds to me like you're the one complaining. Do you hear your wife when she talks to you from the next room? I'll bet she comes to your room before she starts talking. I'll even bet you believe the full page ads that say, "You'll never say 'huh' again"! Hearing aids do not give super-normal hearing. However, carefully chosen and fit instruments provide tremendous improvement. Enough tongue lashing for now. Yes, lots of people like their

hearing aids. Many could not get along without them. Hearing aids do not restore hearing. They certainly have limitations. As you probably remember, any new hearing aid purchased in this office has a trial period during which it can be returned for a full refund if the patient is not satisfied. Historically we have about 2% returns and last year it was less than 0.5%. We recognize that not returning your hearing aid is not the same as saying you love them. So, last year we began asking our patients to complete satisfaction surveys about 3 months after getting new hearing aids. We ask 18 questions about how the hearing aids help in a variety of situations. We believe the most important question is, "Do your hearing aids improve your quality of life?" 100% of our patients responded positively (80% strongly agreed; 15% definitely agreed; 5% agreed). Nearly everyone found their hearing aids comfortable to wear with pleasant sound quality and good clarity as long as there wasn't too much background noise. The situations that produce the least positive responses involve background noise. We know there is a long way to go before you get your "bionic ears", but there have been definite improvements in hearing aid technology with more on the way. Meanwhile, pretend like you're newlyweds and get together in the same room to talk with your wife.

ICom/TV link UpDate

Speaking of successful... The fall newsletter described the TV link/iCom system for improving your enjoyment of television and ease of cell phone use. We are very happy with the results patients are getting from this product. It is very easy to use. The sound quality is great for TV, cell phone and music devices. It works automatically with your hearing aids if they are named Certena, Versata, Exelia, Naida, Audeo, Cassia, Solana or Ambra (oh my!). The cost is \$300 and we give it a resounding 2 thumbs up. A demo unit is on display in our reception area for you to hear. (This device is not to be used by individuals with a heart pacemaker.)



And the internship...winds down

Kristy Deiters is in the final months of her internship here. By the time you receive your next newsletter she will be Dr. Deiters. She has done such a great job that we asked her to stay with us. We are excited to let you know that she has accepted our offer. So, Kristy, can you tell our friends how it feels to have your doctoral program coming to an end? Also, can we please have a recipe for spring?

"It feels like a breath of fresh air! And I'm really excited to stay here too!"

(Wow, that was really brief and to the point)

To offset the chocolatey chocolate cake from last newsletter, here is a slightly healthier but equally yummy recipe.

Fruit Salsa and Cinnamon Chips

Ingredients

2 kiwis, peeled and diced
 2 Golden Delicious or Fuji apples - peeled, cored and diced
 8 ounces raspberries
 1 pound strawberries
 1 tablespoons white sugar
 1/2 tablespoon brown sugar
 3 tablespoons fruit preserves, any flavor
 10 (10 inch) flour tortillas
 butter flavored cooking spray
 2 tablespoons cinnamon sugar



Directions

1. In a large bowl, thoroughly mix kiwis, apples, raspberries, strawberries, white sugar, brown sugar (I sometimes omit the sugar and it still tastes great) and fruit preserves. Cover and chill in the refrigerator at least 15 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
3. Coat one side of each flour tortilla with butter flavored cooking spray. Sprinkle with desired amount of cinnamon sugar. Spray again with cooking spray. Cut into wedges and arrange in a single layer on a large baking sheet.
4. Bake in the preheated oven 8 to 10 minutes. Repeat with any remaining tortilla wedges. Allow to cool approximately 15 minutes. Serve with chilled fruit mixture.

**Don't have time to make the cinnamon chips? Use cinnamon graham crackers or cinnamon sugar pita chips.*

Did this ever happen to you?



Go on, admit it. Sometimes you take off your hearing aids and set them on the coffee table. Every time we fit new hearing aids we warn patients not to do that because animals and babies will get them. That cute little pooch will destroy your hearing aid with one itty-bitty chomp. So, you might think an old audiologist like me would be a little smarter. One evening, while I was sitting on the couch reading, I put my hearing aids on the end table. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a flash of black. Our cat had both of my hearing aids hanging out of his mouth. I yelled, "Louie, no!!!!" as I snatched his back leg. I pulled him close and he kicked me with his hind feet. His nails took a chunk of flesh from my belly so I let him go. Louie ran about 10 feet then turned to laugh at me. No hearing aids were in his mouth. Fortunately, he dropped them by the couch when we wrestled. I was lucky. It only cost me some ointment and a band aid. So, be smarter than me and keep your hearing aids out of harms way when you take them off. If you don't believe me, check out the new display in our office of hearing aids that weren't so lucky.

Ambra Update

In the winter newsletter we talked about the new Phonak Ambra and Audeo S products. Phonak made some pretty great claims for improved hearing, especially in background noise. It seemed a little too good to be true, so we invited a small number of happy hearing aid wearers to try these new "high end" hearing aids and the new "mid priced" products. We completed formal testing in the office and had the participants complete surveys. Results were really pretty impressive. 75% of the participants had improved hearing in background noise with both the "mid priced" and "high end" hearing aids compared to their own aids. In addition, 50% of participants did better with the high end product than the mid priced product. Similarly, in response to a formal questionnaire, 75% of the participants reported better performance of either of the new hearing aids than their own aid. So, if you are struggling with background noise, we have some new options.

TOP 10

REASONS TO HAVE A HEARING RETEST

- 10 You don't have to study
- 9 You really like sitting in the steel sound chamber
- 8 It doesn't hurt
- 7 It doesn't taste bad
- 6 It doesn't take very long
- 5 It will tell if your hearing has changed
- 4 It will tell if you need your ears cleaned or a medical referral
- 3 It will tell if your hearing aid is set properly for your loss
- 2 If you didn't need hearing aids before, it will prove if that's still true (so you can gloat to your family before they get angry that you ignore them)
- 1 If you do wear hearing aids, 9 out of 10 times we can improve their programming if your hearing has changed so you will hear better!*

*(Patients seen between September 2010 – March 2011 for hearing reevaluation/hearing aid check had following outcomes: 63% had some decrease in hearing; 79% had reprogramming or other adjustments made to their hearing aids that resulted in improved hearing; 27% felt changes in hearing or technology warranted new hearing aids)



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Spring Cleaning?

It's been a long hard winter here in Michigan. It's time to dust off (or defrost?) those hearing aids.

Tuesday, April 26 and Wednesday, April 27 is our annual Spring Cleaning. **Call to schedule a time** for our staff to check and clean your hearing aids. We'll replace tubing, filters and ear hooks, as needed - all for a smile (if you're grumpy there will be a \$100 penalty fee). As always, there will be refreshments while you wait.

Dr. Tecca and Kristy Deiters will be available to help with your questions about your hearing or hearing aids. These "no charge" visits are intended for routine maintenance. If you need your hearing checked or your hearing aids reprogrammed we'd love to see you on another day when more time will be available to help.

Call 324-0555 to schedule your visit.