



Ask Your Audiologist

Q. *I have an acquaintance who just got 2 hearing aids in your office. When I got my hearing aid you said I should only have it on one ear.*

Is there a reason to wear 1 or 2 or can't you make up your mind?

A. Sometimes I do have trouble making up my mind, like do I want the tiramisu or chocolate decadence for dessert. I'm usually pretty confident in recommending 1 or 2 hearing aids. In your case, I'm thinking 3 or 4 would be better! Before I tell you the things I consider in making a recommendation, I want to tell you some things that are true and some things that are false:

TRUE – 2 hearing aids allows the ears to continue working together as a team sending important information to the brain that is necessary for “stereo” imaging, loudness perception, localization and suppressing background noise.

FALSE – You can't benefit from 1 hearing aid. You will lose hearing in the unaided ear if you don't wear two. These are sales gimmicks. If a salesperson tells you this, run away!

There are several considerations in choosing to be monaural (1 aid) or binaural (2 aids).

1. Hearing loss – if both ears have hearing loss and both have enough hearing that they will be able to benefit from a hearing aid – fit 2 aids.

2. Physical or cognitive limitations – if a patient is likely to have trouble handling a hearing aid or remembering how to use it – fit 1 aid. If all goes well, a second can be added later.

3. Finances – if 2 hearing aids is cost prohibitive, by all means get one. While two hearing aids are more beneficial for the majority of people, one hearing aid is far better than no hearing aids.

4. Benefit is demonstrated with 2 hearing aids – the majority of people will do better with 2 hearing aids than 1. This means that there is a minority that does not do better with 2 hearing aids. Who are these people? Can I predict them with certainty? A recent study by Robyn M. Cox, Ph.D. and associates at the University of Memphis (Dr. Cox taught me all about hearing aids about 100 years ago when I was in graduate school in Memphis) failed to find any means of predicting with a high level of confidence who these people are. We have always relied on trial periods to help us with this question. If I believe you will do better with 2 hearing aids and we discover it doesn't work as well as expected, we return 1 of the hearing aids and the full purchase price is refunded.

So, if you are wondering if you would be better off with two hearing aids ask yourself the following questions. Do you feel disadvantaged when someone speaks to you from your unaided side? Does sound seem unbalanced? Is sound too soft or not full enough? Answering yes to these questions suggests a second hearing aid should be considered.

Delivery Service

Need your hearing aid cleaned but can't get out? Have a repair that needs picked up? Need batteries or wax traps? This summer we are offering a delivery service for just those situations. Call 324-0555 to make arrangements. The \$10 fee per trip for distances up to 10 miles can be billed to your credit card when you call. We do need you to be home when the driver comes unless you live in a complex with a reception desk.



Bye-bye intern. Hello Dr. Deiters!

It is official. Kristy Deiters has completed all the requirements for the Doctor of Audiology degree at Western Michigan University. This 4 year post graduate program is the current standard to practice audiology. We are all very pleased that Kristy will continue using all that hard earned knowledge and expertise at Hearing Services & Systems. So Dr. Deiters, do you have any reflections on the last year you'd like to share with everyone (along with a 4th of July recipe)?

I must sound like a broken record, but I just can't say enough about my time spent here - I have learned a great deal, and have come to rely on the friendly faces I see around the office each day. If we haven't met yet, please stop in and say hello!

This recipe is one of my all time favorites. It's a great addition to any summer party or gathering... or hearing aid appointment!

Strawberry Pretzel Salad

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups crushed pretzels
 4 1/2 tablespoons white sugar
 3/4 cup butter, melted
 1 cup white sugar
 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese
 1 (8 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
 1 (6 ounce) package strawberry flavored gelatin
 2 cups boiling water
 1 (16 ounce) package frozen strawberries

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Mix together the pretzels, 4 1/2 tablespoons sugar and melted butter. Press into the bottom of a 9x13 inch pan. Bake for 10 minutes (no longer!). Set aside to cool completely.

In a medium bowl, beat the sugar and cream cheese until smooth. Fold in whipped topping. Spread evenly over the cooled crust. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes.

In a medium bowl, stir together the gelatin mix and boiling water. Mix in frozen strawberries, and stir until thawed. Place gelatin mixture in the fridge for about an hour to thicken. Pour over cream cheese mixture in pan. Refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 1 hour.



Did This Ever Happen to You?

Everything sounded muffled. The TV was loud enough. The conversation was loud enough. The words just weren't clear. There was a plugged feeling in my ears. Of course, I ignored it. As the day went on the "huhs" and "whats" increased. The batteries were new and I could tell the hearing aids were working because when I touched my hair I could hear the crackling. Finally, I took them off and found both plugged with ear wax, even though I had changed those wax traps a week before. So, I put in new wax traps and...wow everything was so clear! The moral of the story...if you aren't hearing as well as usual check the batteries, replace the wax traps (if you have them) or clear any blockage from the ear mold tubes (if you have behind the ear aids) and if that doesn't work take 2 aspirin and call us in the morning.



Hello Lynn!

a.k.a. the "Minister of Finance"

You may have seen a new smiling face in the office over the last few months. Joining our happy little group is Lynn Tecca. No, that last name is not a coincidence and she is neither my daughter nor my long lost cousin from the hills of West Virginia. Lynn has worked as an accountant in business, university, banking, health care and not for profit organizations for 35 years - which makes her much older than me. She was the first woman CPA in a 50 man Memphis firm where she worked to keep us alive while I was in graduate school (a much happier recollection for me than she). Lynn has been involved in Hearing Services "behind the scenes" since the initial planning stages in 1989. She finally decided it wasn't fair that I was having all the fun and agreed to become more active at HSS. Lynn is typically in the office 2-3 times a week and is learning all the "nuts and bolts" of the practice while enjoying meeting so many new friendly people.

THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW...

In 2004 digital hearing aids were new and had great promise. A Phonak Claro sold for over \$2000 each. Today's digital hearing aids have many more features for controlling background noise and feedback while improving clarity and the cost averages \$1700 each. Isn't it great when it works out that you get more for less?

Recently, we reported on the Phonak Ambra and its "superior noise reducing capabilities". This aid is a good choice for those who find group situations, restaurants or other situations with background noise very challenging. We were impressed with Ambra but felt its price, \$3050, was too high. Through some very positive conversations with Phonak we are pleased to be able to offer Ambra for \$2700 each, which includes a 3 year warranty on malfunction and loss. While there is no product that is ideal for all, if background noise is the major concern with your present hearing aids, this may be just right for you. Brochures are available or check it out on the internet at

<http://www.phonak.com>



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Permit #307



**Mercury-Free
Batteries
at New
Low Prices!**

Last year we began offering Mercury-Free Batteries as a “greener” alternative to traditional hearing aid batteries. They have been very well received... fortunately. As of June 30, 2011, members of the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), a consortium that represents battery manufacturers, have voluntarily agreed to make totally mercury-free batteries. The batteries you have been using are no longer available, but we have a mercury-free alternative that looks the same and lasts at least as long (about 2 days longer in my hearing aids). We found a new supplier and reached a better deal to help introduce this new line of Rayovac batteries. Until July 31, 2011, you can purchase single packages of 4 batteries for \$3.00 each or cartons of 10 packages (40 batteries) for \$25.00. Stock up. At these prices maybe you should buy extra cartons as gifts for your family and friends. If for any reason you don't like these batteries, please return the unused portion for a refund. Beginning August 1, 2011, the batteries will sell for \$4.00 per package or \$35.00 per carton – 20-30% less than previous pricing. *Take that internet!*

BATTERY ORDER FORM

HEARING SERVICES PREMIUM MERCURY-FREE BATTERIES

*Sale Price: \$3.00 per package (4 batteries).
\$25.00 per carton (10 packages = 40 batteries)
Offer Expires July 31, 2011.*

Size 13 Size 312 Size 10/230 Size 675

Number of packages: _____

Amount: _____

Shipping & Handling: \$2.00

TOTAL _____

Bill my credit card: Visa MasterCard Discover
Card Number: _____
Card Expiration Date: _____
Signature: _____

Mail check and make payable to:

Hearing Services & Systems
576 Romence Ste. 121, Portage, MI 49024