

# Hearing Health – What’s the BIG Deal?

Take a moment and look around you... How many daily activities involve hearing? Think about it; waking up to your alarm clock, answering the phone, listening to music or to the TV, it all requires you to hear. What about meeting people, exchanging conversations and interacting with family or the barista at your local coffee shop? Hearing affects all our day to day interactions and is almost always taken for granted.

When we think of hearing loss, we generally think of hearing aids and sign language. What is overlooked is the overwhelming impact of hearing loss. The intrinsic connection between hearing loss and communication is often forgotten and we don’t recognize the emotional impact, isolation impact, or the toll it takes on our lives.

Hearing loss is a big deal as it is the fastest growing disability in North America. One in four Canadians experiences some degree of hearing loss. All of us, no matter what age, are vulnerable. Hearing loss is the third most prevalent chronic condition in older adults and the widest spread disability. Its prevalence rises with age and the senior population is growing rapidly.

Hearing loss is invisible, and it often takes us a while to recognize the severity of it in ourselves. Some signs of hearing loss in adults include speaking louder than necessary, frequently requesting phrases to be repeated, straining to hear, misunderstanding, favouring one ear, thinking people are mumbling, and avoiding social contacts.

Recent studies show a link between hearing loss and dementia. One study conducted at John Hopkins University, shows that hearing loss accelerates decline in brain function faster than in those whose hearing is normal. Early detection and intervention are crucial to minimizing the impact thus keeping communication smooth and comfortable.

The most important fact to remember is that we are dealing with a loss of communication. Communication is a two-way street and is the basis of all interactions. Engaging in services such as a Hearing Aid Information workshop, Sound Advice on Hearing Health classes, or support from a Hearing Care Counsellor make barriers surrounding hearing loss easier to overcome. We can focus on the hearing loss and come up with a loss or we can focus on communication and make it happen. We can help! Healthy hearing is healthy aging. **GET CONNECTED!**



# DID YOU KNOW?

**Two Thirds of Adults older than 70 have some degree of hearing loss, putting them at risk of...**

- Avoidance or withdrawal from social situations
  - Social rejection and loneliness
    - Stress and depression
    - Increased risk of falls
  - Increased risk of dementia

## Communication Tips...

Use the following strategies to ease communication for you and those around you...

1. Get the listener's attention
2. Face the person
3. Speak slowly

## Hearing Care Counselling Program Services

- Information on hearing health and how to decrease communication barriers
- Counsel regarding grief of hearing loss
- Counsel regarding impact of hearing loss
- Counsel on managing difficult listening situations
- Counsel how to maintain social lifestyle with hearing loss
- Communication Devices
- Sound Advice on hearing aids
- Hearing Screening
- Workshop - Sound Advice on Hearing Health
- Home or Office Appointments

**Canadian Hearing Services** – [www.chs.ca](http://www.chs.ca)

Tel: 1-866-518-0000 TTY: 1-877-215-9530 | [CHS.ca](http://CHS.ca)

