

# Preparing for **your visit**



Things you need to know before  
**your hearing consultation**

# Your first appointment

If you have never visited a hearing care professional, you probably don't know what to expect. You are in for a pleasant experience that is interesting, informative and a great start on your path to better hearing. You will have the opportunity to better understand your hearing needs and explore possible solutions.



## What to expect

Once you arrive for your visit, your hearing care professional will discuss your hearing history to understand what factors have influenced your hearing and also to get more information on your personal hearing needs. In addition, a hearing examination will be conducted. The visit may also include a listening experience with hearing devices, when appropriate. After your hearing care professional has interpreted the results of your hearing evaluation, he/she will explain them to you clearly. It will then be time to develop a plan for the next steps. If you have a hearing loss, hearing aids may be recommended.

## Bring someone with you

Most people find it helpful to bring a spouse, family member or friend to this visit. You will typically get more out of your visit if someone close to you can share in the experience. The hearing care professional will also benefit from learning about your hearing abilities from someone close to you.

# Understanding your hearing

As you prepare for your visit, there are a few things you need to know.

## It's your brain that hears not your ears

Your hearing serves many purposes such as keeping you safe, locating where sound is coming from, and helping you follow conversations. Your ears and brain form a system and work together. Your ears funnel information into the hearing system and your brain processes the information into sound and meaning.



Your brain constantly takes in a wide variety of cues from your ears, and automatically and effortlessly identifies the sounds and locates where they are coming from. Imagine you are about to step into traffic. It is your brain that let you know whether or not it is safe to proceed. Therefore, it is crucial that you can hear all the sounds around you from both ears to understand where a sound is coming from. In noisy environments, your two ears work together to improve speech understanding by providing access to the important details in the environment. The more detailed the information your brain receives the easier it is to identify and follow what is being said.

## Living with a hearing loss is tiring and can affect your ability to remember

Getting through the day with a hearing loss can be hard work. Everyday situations require more effort in order to follow and understand what is being said. When you have a hearing loss, your ears lose their ability to pick up certain sounds. Your brain has to work much harder to "fill in the gaps" and guess what is being said.



Both of these tasks require more mental resources and can leave you feeling exhausted. Using more mental resources to hear leaves you with fewer resources to perform other important brain functions such as remembering what was said. So even if you manage to follow the conversation you may struggle recalling what has been said. To reduce the load on your brain, it is important that you hear all speakers clearly, especially in noisy environments.

## Did you know?



Untreated hearing loss makes it difficult to follow conversations and is often very exhausting



Untreated hearing loss often leads to reduced contact with family, friends and colleagues, which can turn into feelings of isolation and depression



Untreated hearing loss makes it difficult to stay connected to communication and entertainment devices like TV and phones



# Sound is an individual experience

Many people are surprised to find out that no two people experience sound in exactly the same way. Two people with identical test results may experience the same listening environment very differently. These differences are more than mere preferences. They reflect how each individual experiences sound.

Therefore, the best listening experiences are those that can be customised to match your listening needs.



Sport



Family dinner



Watching TV



Work



Meeting friends



Traffic



Other situations?

## Which situations do you find challenging?

*Untreated hearing loss affects us in different ways. Conversations in crowded rooms become a strain for some, while others may find it difficult to hear certain sounds.*

# Hearing is central to your health and quality of life

## Using hearing aids helps reduce mental decline

As hearing loss increases people become increasingly frustrated and socially isolated. Now new studies show, that untreated hearing loss is associated with a greater risk of dementia\*. While no hearing aids can cure dementia or restore your hearing, they do go a long way in helping to keep your brain fit.

When you wear hearing aids you will find it easier to communicate and participate in social activities. This stimulates your brain and helps decrease the risk of accelerated mental decline related to untreated hearing loss.\*\*

Taking care of your hearing is one of the important keys to maintaining an active intellectual and social life.

### Risk of developing dementia with untreated hearing loss

**Mild** loss: **2X** more likely

**Moderate** hearing loss: **3X** more likely

**Severe** hearing loss: **5X** more likely



\* Source: Lin et al. (2011). Compared with normal hearing, increased risk of dementia: 1.89 for mild hearing loss, 3.00 for moderate hearing loss, and 4.94 for severe hearing loss.

\*\* Amieva et al. (2015). Self-Reported Hearing Loss, Hearing Aids, and Cognitive Decline in Elderly Adults: A 25-Year Study. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. Volume 63, Issue 10; 2099–2104.

## Help keep your brain fit



**Untreated**  
Hearing loss

↓  
Less stimulation  
of the brain

↓  
Accelerated mental decline  
Higher risk of dementia

↓  
**Trouble with remembering  
and problem solving**



**Treated**  
Hearing loss

↓  
Improved  
communication skills

↓  
Socially active  
Stimulation of the brain

↓  
**Helps keep your brain fit**



# Preparing for your visit

To get the most out of your consultation, please think about how your hearing has changed and affects your life. Take a moment to complete these questions and bring your answers with you to your appointment. You might want to discuss the questions with someone close to you.

1. Tell us about what brought you in here today?

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To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements.

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
2. I find that people mumble a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I have difficulties hearing the television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I have difficulties hearing on the phone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I find it difficult to determine where sounds are coming from	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. It is difficult for me to hear soft speech, like whispers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I find it difficult to hear speech in places such as restaurants and parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I feel like I have to concentrate a lot when more than one person is speaking to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Agree		Neutral		Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
9. I tend to withdraw from social situations because it is difficult to follow conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I feel tired and/or mentally exhausted at the end of days that involve a lot of conversing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I have a hard time remembering what was said in conversations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I believe a hearing aid can change my quality of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Please write down any questions you have about your hearing

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14. Other comments

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15. Would your spouse, family member or friend like to make any comments?

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Please contact us if you have any questions before your next appointment.  
It is important to us that you get the best possible results as you move forward.

Hearing Care Professional:

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Telephone number:

Date of consultation:

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Notes:

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