

How Do I Know If I Have A Hearing Loss?

Hearing loss occurs to most people as they age. Hearing loss can be due to the aging process, exposure to loud noise, certain medications, infections, head or ear trauma, congenital (birth or prenatal) or hereditary factors, diseases, as well as a number of other causes. In the year 2001, there are some 28 million people in the USA with hearing loss. Hearing loss is the single most common birth "defect" in America. Hearing loss in adults, particularly in seniors, is common.

You may have hearing loss if...

- You hear people speaking but you have to strain to understand their words.
- You frequently ask people to repeat what they said.
- You don't laugh at jokes because you miss too much of the story or the punch line.
- You frequently complain that people mumble.
- You need to ask others about the details of a meeting you just attended.
- You play the TV or radio louder than your friends, spouse and relatives.
- You cannot hear the doorbell or the telephone.
- You find that looking at people when they speak to you makes it easier to understand.

If you have any of these symptoms, you should see an audiologist to get an "audiometric evaluation." An audiometric evaluation (AE) is the term used to describe a diagnostic hearing test, performed by a licensed audiologist. An AE is not just pressing the button when you hear a "beep." Rather, an audiometric evaluation allows the audiologist to determine the type and degree of your hearing loss, and it tells the audiologist how well or how poorly you understand speech. After all, speech is the single most important sound, and the ability to understand speech is extremely important. The AE also includes a thorough case history (interview) as well as visual inspection of the ear canals and eardrum. The results of the AE are useful to the physician should the audiologist conclude that your hearing problem may be treated with medical or surgical alternatives.

Written hearing tests, "dial a hearing test" and other online hearing tests are not particularly accurate and are certainly not diagnostic tests, but may be utilized as screening tools. These screenings are usually free and can be scored within a few seconds. Written hearing screenings may point the patient (or consumer) in a particular direction and may help validate that a hearing problem may indeed exist.

Therefore, we have designed a written hearing screening to provide you with some general guidelines about your hearing ability. It is free and it may offer you insight regarding the likelihood that a hearing loss is present. If you would like to take the written hearing screening, [Click here.](#)