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**May is National Better Hearing Month, the American Academy of Audiology Encourages Getting Hearing Checked**

Hearing loss is on the rise

**RESTON, Va., April 19, 2022—**May is National Better Hearing Month and the American Academy of Audiology is encouraging Americans to make an appointment with an audiologist for a hearing test.

“Healthy hearing means not waiting to check your hearing until hearing loss is so significant it’s impacting your ability to participate in your work, social events you enjoy, or conversations with loved ones,” said Sarah Sydlowski, Au.D., Ph.D., MBA, president of the American Academy of Audiology. Sydlowski is also audiology director of the Hearing Implant Program and associate chief improvement officer at the Cleveland Clinic.“Subtle changes in hearing may not be immediately noticeable but can make a big difference in quality of life.” She added, “audiologists can check your hearing and make recommendations for improving hearing health and function and can offer tips for protecting your hearing to make sure it can serve you well for a lifetime.”

Hearing loss impacts a large number of Americans. According to a [2016 study by the National Institutes of Health NIDCD](https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/quick-statistics-hearing), approximately 15 percent (37.5 million) of American adults aged 20 to 69, have some trouble with hearing and approximately 28.8 million could benefit from the use of hearing aids. As the baby boomer population ages, more Americans are forced to face hearing health challenges. Growing numbers of younger Americans are also reporting hearing problems.

While age is still the greatest factor in hearing loss, many younger people also experience hearing difficulty due to exposure to loud music and noises including occupational noise. Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30 percent) have used them despite growing evidence that doing so results in better long-term outcomes.

“Research demonstrates that untreated hearing loss in seniors is related to poor health outcomes including significantly increased [falls](https://www.audiology.org/consumers-and-patients/hearing-and-balance/increased-risk-of-falling/) and [dementia,](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/the-hidden-risks-of-hearing-loss#:~:text=In%20a%20study%20that%20tracked,more%20likely%20to%20develop%20dementia.)” said Sydlowski. “Individuals with even mild hearing loss experience significant impact in the form of reduced quality of life and cognitive health,” Sydlowski explained. “Most importantly, hearing is what connects us to the people in our lives and as we age, those social connections are increasingly valuable. It’s so important that we treasure our hearing and do all we can to support healthy hearing for a lifetime.”

Audiologists are the experts in hearing health. While hearing aids are the most commonly recognized treatment for hearing loss, there are many factors that go into determining the best way to manage changes in hearing. An audiologist is the specialist who is best equipped determine the underlying reason for the hearing loss and to further determine the appropriate treatment. They can also offer custom options for protecting hearing. The Academy provides a directory on its website “[Find an Audiologist](https://members.audiology.org/cvweb/cgi-bin/memberdll.dll/info?wrp=find-an-audiologist.htm)”, where consumers can locate audiologists based on geography and specialty areas.

For more information, visit [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org).

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**The American Academy of Audiology** is the world's largest professional organization of, by and for audiologists. Representing the interests of audiologists and future audiologists nationwide, the Academy is dedicated to providing quality hearing care services through professional development, education, research, and increased public awareness of hearing and balance disorders. For more information, visit [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org).