

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HEARING LOSS

In the Clinic
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Who is at risk for hearing loss?

- Hearing loss can occur at any age, but it is most common among older people.
- Some type of hearing loss occurs in 30% of people older than age 65 and in 14% of people between the ages of 45 and 64 years.

What causes hearing loss?

- Age-related changes in the ear.
- Prolonged exposure to high levels of noise.
- Certain medications, including aminoglycoside antibiotics.
- Infection or immune disorders.
- Head injury or tumors.
- Smoking or having diabetes.
- Some people are born with hearing loss.

How is it diagnosed?

- An otoscope is used to examine the inside of the ear for any signs of injury, infection, or earwax buildup.
- If you are older than 50 years, your doctor may ask you about your hearing and test your ears for hearing loss.
- If you think you are experiencing hearing regardless of your age, you should ask for a hearing test.



- A hearing specialist (audiologist) performs tests to determine what tones or sounds you can hear.
- Early detection allows for earlier treatment, perhaps before losses become permanent.

How is it treated?

- Surgery may be used to treat hearing loss, depending on the cause.
- Hearing aids are used if the hearing loss does not respond to other therapy.
- Wearing ear protection when exposed to loud noises can reduce the risk for hearing loss.

For More Information

www.asha.org/public/hearing/Hearing-Testing/
Information on hearing screening and testing from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/Pages/noise.aspx
Information on noise-induced hearing loss from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm185723.htm
Information on hearing loss and hearing aids from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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