THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HEARING LOSS

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.

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.