

Ears4U

HEARING SERVICES

www.ears4u.net

Email us at info@ears4u.net
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615-205-7942

Monday through Friday, 9am–5pm
Saturday by appointment only

Open Clinic Hours:

Mon & Wed, 9am-10am
Tues & Thurs, 2pm-3pm

Walk-ins welcome, appointment preferred.

Good to Hear



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The Link Between Hearing and Brain Function

Hearing loss is often viewed as a stand-alone medical issue. However, there are additional health concerns associated with hearing loss that shouldn't be ignored. Studies are beginning to show that **memory and brain function can both be negatively impacted as a result of hearing loss.**

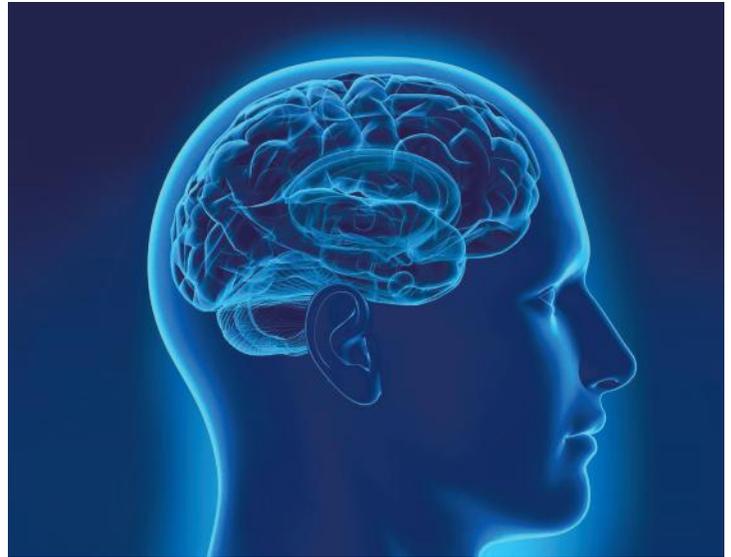
When we think of hearing, our first thought is generally our ears, but in reality, it is the brain that hears. Understanding the brain's role in quality hearing is key to understanding hearing loss.

Oftentimes, the additional effort dedicated to listening when there is a decrease in hearing ability can cause stress, which in turn may result in decreased memory resources. In essence, one's brain becomes so taxed from the mere effort of listening, that there is no energy left to remember the information that was taken in.

Here is the core issue: we actually hear with our brain, and not our ears. Our brain's ability to analyze information heard is impacted by the effort the brain must put forth in order to first decode the actual words heard.

The link between hearing and brain function also suggests connections between hearing loss and dementia. According to multiple John Hopkins studies¹, the use of properly fitted hearing aids can help in preventing dementia. In fact, hearing loss can have a greater impact on potential dementia than other health conditions or even genetic diseases.

Additionally, studies² have shown that those who



use effective hearing aids are more socially engaged and possess a more positive outlook on life. The relationships one engages in once hearing loss is treated can be yet another preventative measure when it comes to cognitive abilities, memory, and dementia. A recent study by the Journal of the American Geriatric Society³ shows that there is a greater chance of cognitive decline for those with hearing difficulties who do not use hearing aids. This is largely due to the natural tendency to withdraw from social activities when listening becomes difficult.

One of the best things you can do to preserve your memory and cognitive abilities is to get a hearing test. Be proactive about your hearing. Many hearing evaluations are covered by Medicare or insurance and can help identify any hearing difficulties you may be experiencing.

Do you have an FSA account?

If so, you may be able to use your funds for new hearing aids! Did your health insurance plan start over January 1? Make sure you're using your hearing aid benefit to the fullest. Call our office, and we would be happy to check your benefits for you and let you know what you may be eligible for!

Refer a Friend, Get a Free Accessory!

If you refer a friend or family member to Ears 4 U and they purchase hearing aids, we will give you both a FREE accessory of your choice! Just mention this promotion when you or your loved one come in.



¹ "Hearing Loss Linked to Accelerated Brain Tissue Loss - 01/22/2014." Johns Hopkins Medicine Health Library, John Hopkins Medicine, 22 Jan. 2014, www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/hearing_loss_linked_to_accelerated_brain_tissue_loss_.

² "The National Council on the Aging." Seniors Research Group, May 1999, pp. 1-12.

³ Amieva, Hélène, et al. "Self-Reported Hearing Loss, Hearing Aids, and Cognitive Decline in Elderly Adults: A 25-Year Study." Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, vol. 63, no. 10, 2015, pp. 2099-2104., doi:10.1111/jgs.13649

Help Delay and Even Prevent Cognitive Decline

In order to help delay and even prevent cognitive decline, it is important to understand more about your own hearing and determine if interventions are necessary. In fact, a study* conducted at Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC) found that older adults whose evaluation revealed the need for hearing aids performed significantly better on cognitive tests than those who needed, but did not use, a hearing aid.

**<http://newsroom.cumc.columbia.edu/blog/2016/04/25/hearing-aid-use-associated-improved-cognitive-function-hearing-impaired-elderly/>*

What To Do

- **Have your hearing evaluated regularly after the age of 50.** The sooner you address the issue, the less likely you are to suffer cognitive disadvantages. Auditory processing can become more difficult with age and/or untreated hearing loss. It is important to identify hearing problems early on in order to keep the brain pathways strong.
- **Protect your ears.** Even if you don't need hearing aids, there are many ways to keep your ears protected from loud sounds.
- **Lead a healthy lifestyle.** Be wise about your overall health. According to Weill Cornell Medical School, it is important to prevent low blood flow, which can harm your inner ear. Exercising, eating well, getting a massage, checking the side effects of your medications, and ceasing to smoke are all steps you can take that can increase health and well being.



THE HEARING AID TEST DRIVE™

You now know that the brain does the hearing – not your ears. Modern hearing aid technology is able to send your brain the signals needed to understand conversations. Each hearing aid brand has their unique way of “feeding” your brain. At Ears 4 U, we help you discover the right hearing aid for you - one that gives your unique brain the information needed to enjoy life to the fullest.

So how do we know which hearing aid is best able to give your brain the information it needs?

The only way to know is by wearing the hearing aid in your day to day life. How you hear is as unique as your fingerprint and what works for one person might not work for another. Our Hearing Aid Test Drive is designed to let you try out different hearing aids to figure out which one is right for your brain.