



THE HEARING CLINIC
35 WATERLOO RD
WYNBERG, 7800
021 - 797 7948
Mon - Fri
8h30 - 17h00

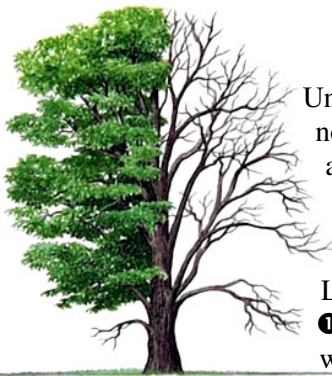
TOKAI VILLAGE
VANS ROAD
021 - 715 5623
Tues & Thur
8h30 - 16h30

VALYLAND CENTRE
FISH HOEK
021 - 782 3322
Mon - Fri
8h30 - 16h30
(Closed Tues/Thur pm)

19 BELVEDERE RD
CLAREMONT
021 - 797 7948
Mon & Wed
9h00 - 14h00

Newsletter Autumn 2013

We are thrilled to have finally launched our new look Website. At www.hearingclinic.co.za you will find a wealth of information: our previous newsletters, articles we've written, some ongoing news and questions, self-assessment tools, information on the services we offer, the charities we've supported, and if you want to know who's who, you can even see and read about each staff member. We have also linked it to our Facebook page, so please "Like" us there.



Missing an Ear?

Unilateral Hearing Loss occurs when there is a hearing loss of any degree in one ear and normal hearing in the other. Single Sided Deafness refers to unaidable hearing in one ear and normal hearing in the opposite ear. "Unaidable" means a hearing loss with very poor word recognition, and/or marked intolerance for amplified sounds so conventional methods of amplification are not appropriate.

Listening with two ears provides a person with improved hearing in the following ways:

- ❶ Having two ears that work together in sending the sound to the brain helps us pinpoint where the sound is coming from depending on which ear receives the signal first as well as the loudness of the signal at each ear. This localisation occurs in both quiet and in noise.
- ❷ The ability to pick out sound or to focus on a sound while in a noisy environment.
- ❸ An individual's overall hearing ability improves: Listening with two ears means that you are able to detect softer sounds. This gives the listener a marked advantage over those with unilateral/one-sided hearing.

It's a common misconception that people with Unilateral Hearing don't suffer from the typical negative effects of hearing loss because one of their ears may be perfectly normal. Unilateral Hearing Loss can have a debilitating effect on a person's life. The psychological effect that unilateral hearing loss has may result in a person feeling excluded or isolated, feelings of insecurity and self-doubt and it may have an adverse effect on work and social interactions. Localisation of sound becomes more difficult, picking out a signal in noise is almost impossible, and more volume is needed when listening with only one ear.

The causes may include congenital reasons (occurring before or at birth), acquired through illness, trauma or medical treatment. These may consist of malformations of the inner ear or an absence of the auditory nerve, recurring infections, growths and tumours on the nerves or physical damage to the head, ear or nerves.

Current management options aim to restore the sensation of hearing from the worse ear by sending a signal to the better hearing side. This is possible either via a surgical solution or a non-surgical option.

Surgical: Bone conduction hearing solutions: Bone conduction hearing solutions like a Baha (Bone Anchored Hearing Aid) are surgically placed into the bone behind the bad ear. A sound processor, fixed to the implant transmits sound through bone conduction to the cochlea of the better ear.

Non-Surgical: Air conduction hearing solutions: Contralateral Routing of Signal (CROS) hearing aids have a transmitter placed in/on the bad ear which sends the sound signal to a receiver microphone in/on the better ear. The sound signal is typically transferred wirelessly between the ears.

There are many advantages to hearing with two ears, the most important being the ability to localise sound and the increased ability to hear speech in noise. There are management options available for those experiencing unilateral hearing loss so that they may once again listen with two ears – as Mother Nature intended.

Please check the replacement value of your hearing aids annually and specify them on your all risks insurance for loss or damage!

Our **Hearing Therapy Clinic** is growing and we have now roped Beth in, who not only has a special interest in Auditory Processing Disorders but also in facilitation work, which summarises what she is there to do. Her job is to facilitate comprehensive management of your hearing impairment, over and above the use of hearing aids and assistive devices. Celeste and Beth have designed the clinic to address the following issues:

- ☺ *Emotional and lifestyle adjustment* to hearing loss and understanding the implications of the impairment.
- ☺ *Techniques and strategies* that can improve your life at home, at work and socially such as how to control and manage speech environments, re-establishing conversation and how to maintain conversation.
- ☺ *Exploring Assistive Devices* to use with or without your hearing aids for additional support.
- ☺ *Auditory Training* to develop and improve your ability to recognise speech by using and interpreting the auditory signal – making better use of what you hear, especially in the presence of background noise.
- ☺ *Speechreading* training to learn how to make the most of verbal and non-verbal cues during a conversation, from lip reading to interpretation of gestures, expression and the environment.
- ☺ *Telephone Training* which enhances your communication skills on the telephone.
- ☺ *Tinnitus Retraining Therapy* which focuses on minimising the effect that tinnitus has on a person's life.

There are 3 audiologists in the Western Cape who do the above to the extent that we do, and we have 2 of them! We don't charge exorbitant fees for these services either, just the normal hourly rate in line with the typical medical aid tariffs and if you do have medical aid cover, it should be paid for as normal consultations. Please make use of these exceptional and specialized services or ask us more about them.

Keeping Your Best Friend Alive

Moisture and ear wax impair the function of hearing aids and cause failures. The most common cause of hearing aid malfunction is moisture which has made its way into the working parts of the instrument and caused corrosion. Even if you haven't got the hearing aid wet or submerged while swimming or showering, condensation builds up inside the hearing aid from wearing it on the body and environmental temperature changes. It has always been a problem and in the past was temporarily managed by giving the hearing aid a good shake in the morning or turning the hairdryer on it every now and then. These days however, with hearing aid electronics becoming more sensitive and ever smaller, the componentry can be more fragile and susceptible to moisture damage. If dampness gets onto the battery contacts the hearing aid shorts or drains battery life, if the receiver (which can be right in the ear next to wet wax) gets moisture on it, it whizzes and screeches, if the microphones (multiple now) get wet, it dampens sound. Things have changed and with that we have had to find new ways to combat issues and avoid expensive repair charges by manufacturers.

We know that keeping a hearing aid in working order takes maintenance, but we also know that even the best kept hearing aids do occasionally need a service by the professionals. However, if you make sure that your best friend is kept clean and dry, chances are you will not need the expensive lab services quite as often.

We've found a few products that address these issues specifically. The Dry-Go dries the hearing aids with a convective flow of warm air. Daily usage reduces failures, repair costs and extends the life of your hearing aids significantly.

It switches off automatically after 3 hours to ensure correct usage and limit energy consumption.

The Dry-UV does the same but also eliminates bacteria and viruses that are typically found on the hearing aids and earmoulds. This is a solution for those ears prone to infection or irritation. The warm, moist environment of the ear canal makes a perfect breeding ground for bacteria and we have always battled to keep earmoulds and hearing aids sanitary. Wax still needs to be cleaned off the hearing aid, but now we can get rid of the invisible bugs too.

In the Practice

Just when you think we've made enough babies, we surprise you with more! The best news though is that it's another boy! We don't have a name yet, but we can't wait to meet Celeste's new baby sometime in June. As always, we already have contingency plans in place, so our office hours and services will only be affected where absolutely necessary.



Celeste's baby is however not the only addition to the practice. Julanda, who managed the coming and going of parcels, and our morning receptionist Yvonne, have both moved on to other things. We are sad to lose them, but we have found worthy replacements. Belinda is our new administrative perfectionist while the new face at reception is the young and vibrant Nicole. We look forward to a long and happy future with them both.

Francis Slabber

Celeste Leveson

Nadine Jooste

Beth Cockcroft

Elisha Berridge