



Francis Slabber & Associates

Registered Audiologists

"Professionals who Care about your Hearing"

THE HEARING CLINIC

30 CONSTANTIA RD
WYNBERG, 7800

021 - 797 7948

Monday - Friday

TOKAI VILLAGE

VANS ROAD

021 - 715 5623

Tuesday & Thursday

VALYLAND CENTRE

FISH HOEK

021 - 782 3322

Monday - Friday

19 BELVEDERE RD

CLAREMONT

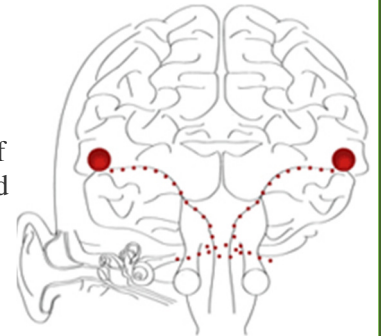
021 - 797 7948

Mon / Wed / Fri

Hear & Now Spring 2016

Hearing Loss and The Brain

Many people believe that developing a hearing loss in later life is just a part of getting older. However, we know that there are a multitude of social and emotional changes that take place due to a loss of hearing which left unmanaged, can lead to a reduced quality of life. Despite this knowledge many people still choose to leave their hearing loss untreated or give up on managing it. A number of new studies have emerged which show that there is a close link between untreated hearing loss and neurological deterioration - those with untreated hearing loss are 24% more likely to develop dementia!



But how can hearing loss be linked to cognitive decline? There are four main theories to consider at this point. The first is the least likely - that there is a common cause between hearing loss and dementia, such as high blood pressure / diabetes. However, studies have not shown a consistent link with any of these.

The second theory is that of 'cognitive load'. This refers to how the brain functions differently when one has to focus or strain to hear clearly. Since more of the brain's processing power is being used to concentrate on hearing correctly, less is available for other cognitive functions, such as short term memory. If this is the reason, then managing hearing loss with hearing aids should make communication easier, reducing fatigue, easing the burden on the brain's functioning, thus allowing other cognitive functions to continue uninhibited.

The third and most accepted theory is that hearing loss has an impact on the auditory nerve and actual physical structure of the brain's auditory cortex. Imaging studies have shown that adults with hearing loss actually have less grey matter focusing on receiving and processing sound in the brain. To many this may be surprising- surely the brain does not shrink or lose brain cells because of hearing loss? Research shows that when areas of the brain are not being fully utilized as intended, they are reorganized for other functions - such as speechreading to ease communication. There is evidence that the use of amplification such as hearing aids can cause the brain to recover some of these areas but the most essential thing to learn from this research is that it is important to keep the brain stimulated while hearing loss is still in its early stages in order to prevent the loss of auditory brain matter.

The final theory is linked to the psychological impact of hearing loss. It is a known and documented fact that social isolation can lead to dementia and it is a known and documented fact that hearing loss often leads to social isolation. Once again, the use of amplification devices to overcome the communication difficulties which lead to social withdrawal, may slow or prevent the processes that could eventually lead to dementia and cognitive decline.

Even though we don't know exactly how hearing loss and neurological deterioration are linked, one cannot deny that they are. Amplification methods have been shown to have a positive effect on the brain and on the person as a whole, as hard as it may be to get used to. It has been accepted that this is the most promising method of preventing dementia as a result of hearing loss - assuming, of course, that the hearing aids are in the ears and not in the drawer!

Attached is a leaflet of information on anti-aging techniques to keep the body, the brain and the soul youthful.

Ref: Hearing loss in older adults affects neural systems supporting speech comprehension. J. Neurosci. 2011;31:12638-12643.

Reminder:

Let your hearing aid batteries "breathe" by removing the protective sticker 5 min before inserting them to extend the battery life.

Our Vision and Our Mission

The words "Vision and Mission" can sound quite corporate and commercialized. They carry with them an association of business and company policy. However, they also bring with them a set of rules and values, definite direction and a code of conduct which ensures the best possible service to customers.

When Janet Steer started The Hearing Clinic in 1991, she had hoped to support her ENT husband Dr John Steer when the need for ethical audiological service was paramount. Over the years The Hearing Clinic, now known as Francis Slabber & Associates, has become a prominent name in Audiology both to patients and colleagues. We are often turned to for advice by other professionals and believe that we set an example for other practices. A reputation like that comes with a great responsibility and therefore a more business-like approach. This year, we have endeavoured to formalize our Vision for the practice as well as our Mission Statement.

Our Vision:

To be The Recognized Leader in Hearing Healthcare.

Our Mission:

We are a dynamic team who provides professional and holistic ear and hearing related services with a primary focus on adult audiology.

We are dedicated to being efficient, ethical and consistent thus creating an experience that is supportive, empathic and mindful.

We are driven to learn, to grow and to provide excellence in our relationships with our clients, community and our team. Professionals who care about your hearing.

Everything we do in the practice is measured by the above. Whether it is the testing services we offer, the products we supply, the after-sale service, the customer care and communication or invoicing. It also applies internally with issues of conduct and discipline. It is who we are. We strive to be the best in the business but we cannot do it without you, your feedback and input.

We therefore invite you to comment, offer advice, compliments and yes, even complaints so that we know what might still need improvement! We would like you to know that Francis Slabber & Associates is serious about offering an ethical, professional and comprehensive service to all those who knock on our doors.

Reminder:

Update the replacement value of your hearing aids annually for insurance purposes

In and Around the Rooms

We are in the process of updating our website and Facebook pages. We'd like to update useful information and expand on the testimonials. We invite you to send through any personal stories, experiences or comments you may have and ask for permission to add them to the sites. We would love to add your name, but you are also welcome to remain anonymous. We are looking for the good, the brilliant and the touching but should there be a bad or ugly between them, we will take it as well – maybe not to use on the sites but to make sure it doesn't happen again! Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for changes. www.hearingclinic.co.za and www.facebook.com/francislabber/

We've had a bit of internal reorganization. Celeste Leveson has been appointed as our Operations Manager and will make sure that things go according to plan. She has proven herself to be a formidable manager but will still fulfill her duties as a practicing audiologist. Karen is our Finance Manager who deals with our accounts, whilst Barbara, Belinda and Nicole remain our administrative support team.

BABY ALERT: Celeste is expecting! We will be welcoming the new addition around March 2017!

Reminder: Our Hours & Locations

Wynberg: 30 Constantia Road	Monday to Friday 8h30 – 17h00	021 797 7948
Claremont: 19 Belvedere Rd	Mon & Wed 9h00 – 14h00 Friday 8h30 – 16h30	021 797 7948
Fish Hoek: Valyland Centre	Mon, Wed, Fri 8h30 – 16h30 Tues & Thurs 8h30 - 13h00	021 782 3322
Tokai: Tokai Village, Vans Road	Tues & Thurs 8h30 – 16h30	021 715 5623

Francis Slabber

Celeste Leveson

Elisha Berridge

Beth Cockcroft

Sarah Buitendag