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PROFESSIONAL CARE FOR ALL YOUR HEARING PROBLEMS

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When Hearing Aids Alone are not Enough

In our Spring 2007 Newsletter we analysed the results of a questionnaire sent out to assess the success with which hearing aids are being worn by our patients. 71% reported a 75% - 100% benefit, 23% rated their benefit above 50%, while 6% were generally unhappy. Since then, we have been addressing the most common concerns raised. We have already discussed:

- 👂 My Hearing aid is not working
- 👂 I can't hear speech in background noise
- 👂 It's uncomfortable to wear
- 👂 I feel blocked up with it in my ear

Accents, Amplifiers and Alternative Listening Devices

One of the most common complaints is that hearing aids don't help with the TV or the Phone. We know that there are a host of reasons why hearing aids alone might not be enough and even more ways of addressing the problems.

Think about the way a telephone should be used and you'll realize that normally you hold the receiver tightly to your ear, thereby allowing the signal from the receiver to travel straight down your ear canal to the eardrum. There is no obstruction in the way (hopefully) and if you're not hearing, it's usually either a bad line, poor speech or your hearing which is failing you. Put a hearing aid in your ear and the situation changes. Now you have an obstruction in the ear canal, microphones positioned on top of your ear and feedback caused by the proximity of the phone to the aid. Although technology has come a long way in the last few years, some challenges still remain, and unfortunately, this often means that one has to look beyond the hearing aid for assistance. We encourage you to keep the hearing aids in your ears when using the phone, but in some cases the last resort is to remove the hearing aid – just don't lose it! BUT, there are tricks and devices that can be tried first.

1. Make sure that you are holding the phone receiver in line with the microphones on the hearing aid. Keep in mind that these might be on top or behind your ear and not necessarily in your ear.
2. Angle the handset of the phone so that the receiver does not rest against the microphones of the hearing aid. This will cause a whistle from the aid and by simply tilting the handset, you could improve the hearing and get rid of the screeching.
3. Consider that some hearing aids allow for alternate programs to be set for use with a phone. If your hearing aid has this feature you can be given a program for telephone use.
4. Buy an amplifying telephone. These are available from Telkom, cost effective and allow you to adjust the volume of the phone for each call. These phones are usually Telecoil friendly, so if your hearing aid has a built-in induction loop, you could access that program when using the phone.
5. Some new hearing aids on the market have Bluetooth capabilities, which allow you to pair your cell phone to your hearing aids and listen directly through the aids. This has great advantages but does require some technical know-how from your side, and they don't come cheap – yet!
6. Accents are very difficult to decipher even with normal hearing, but more so with high frequency hearing losses, so you can be forgiven for not coping with challenging accents!

.....Television & Hearing

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

