

Hear Well

FACT SHEET



National Prevalence

Approximately 38 million Americans report having some degree of hearing loss.¹



Mental Health

Individuals who reported having moderate or worse untreated hearing loss were more likely to use mental health services for psychosocial disorders such as depression than their peers with hearing loss who wear hearing aids.⁴



Dementia Risk

Mild untreated hearing loss doubles dementia risk, moderate hearing loss triples the risk, and people with a severe hearing impairment are 5x more likely to develop dementia.⁶



Accidental Injuries

Those who reported having moderate untreated hearing loss were 70% more likely to have an accidental injury at work or at leisure.⁸ Even mild untreated hearing loss results in a 3x greater risk of falls.⁹



Age-Related Risk

The rate for hearing loss by age increases the most after 65 years of age.² Around 1 in 3 people between the ages of 65 and 74 have hearing loss, and nearly half of those older than 75 have difficulty hearing.³



Health Care Costs

Untreated hearing loss is associated with 46% higher total health care costs over a 10-year period.⁵



Hospital Readmissions

Untreated hearing loss is linked to an increased risk for 30-day hospital readmission, increased risk of emergency department visits, and longer hospital stays.⁷



Treatment Satisfaction

8 in 10 who chose to treat their hearing loss report **life-changing results** and 91% of hearing aid owners say they are satisfied with their hearing professional.²

¹ Blackwell DL, Lucas JW, Clarke TC. Summary health statistics for U.S. adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2012 (PDF). National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 10(260). 2014.

² Powers TA, Carr K. MarkeTrak 2022: Navigating the changing landscape of hearing healthcare. Hearing Review. 2022;29(5):12-17.

³ Age-Related Hearing Loss (Presbycusis) — Causes and Treatment. (2022). Retrieved from <https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/age-related-hearing-loss#:~:text=Approximately%20one%20in%20three%20people,%2C%20doorbells%2C%20and%20smoke%20alarms>

⁴ Bigelow RT, Reed NS, Brewster KK, Huang A, Rebok G, Rutherford BR, Lin FR. Association of Hearing Loss with Psychological Distress and Utilization of Mental Health Services Among Adults in the United States. JAMA Netw Open. 2020 Jul 1;3(7):e2010986. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.10986. PMID: 32687587; PMCID: PMC7372323.

⁵ Patients with Untreated Hearing Loss Incur Higher Health Care Costs Over Time | Johns Hopkins. (2018). Retrieved 20 May 2022, from <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2018/patients-with-untreated-hearing-loss-incur-higher-health-care-costs-over-time#:~:text=Older%20adults%20with%20untreated%20hearing%20loss%20incur%20substantially%20higher%20total,Bloomberg%20School%20of%20Public%20Health>

⁶ "The Hidden Risks of Hearing Loss." Johns Hopkins Medicine. https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/healthy_aging/healthy_body/the-hidden-risks-of-hearing-loss Accessed August 16, 2018.

⁷ Trends in Health Care Costs and Utilization Associated With Untreated Hearing Loss Over 10 Years." Nicholas S. Reed, Aylin Altan, Jennifer A. Deal, Charlotte Yeh, Alexander D. Kravetz, Margaret Wallhagen, Frank R. Lin JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. 2019 Jan; 145(1): 27–34. Published online 2018 Nov 8. doi: 10.1001/jamaoto.2018.2875. PMCID: PMC6439810.

⁸ Lin, H. W., Mahboubi, H., & Bhattacharyya, N. (2018). Self-reported Hearing Difficulty and Risk of Accidental Injury in US Adults, 2007 to 2015. JAMA otolaryngology-- head & neck surgery, 144(5), 413–417. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaoto.2018.0039>

⁹ Tiasse VL, Tang K, Vawdrey DK, Raso R, Adelman JS, Yu SP, Applebaum JR, Lalwani AK. Impact of Hearing Loss on Patient Falls in the Inpatient Setting. Am J Prev Med. 2020 Jun;58(6):839-844. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2020.01.019. PMID: 32444002.

Social Engagement

There was a significant decline in perceptions of loneliness following 4 to 6 weeks of hearing aid use.¹⁰

Earnings Gap

Those with hearing loss earn 72-78% of the wages of people with no hearing loss, depending on age.¹¹

Noise Trauma for Teens

It is estimated that between 13-18% of American middle and high school students have measurable hearing loss likely due to excessive noise.¹²

Cognitive Health

Hearing loss treatment improves symptoms of those living with cognitive impairment.¹⁴ One study showed that treating hearing loss through hearing aids was the largest factor that protected participants from cognitive decline.¹⁵

Economic Impact

Better hearing has a positive effect on the U.S. economy. The untreated hearing loss population produces around \$133 billion per year in health and unemployment costs.¹³

Professional Treatment

In a survey of over 3,000 with hearing difficulty, 38% of individuals with hearing difficulty reported having a hearing aid.²

Hearing Aids 101

Hearing aids have made enormous strides. Today's discreet technology provides clear, rich sound quality and better speech understanding in noisy environments; and may include features like health monitors, fall detection, language translation, and tinnitus maskers. Many manufacturers also make phone apps for hearing aids, so you can adjust your hearing aids right from your smartphone. With Bluetooth connectivity, your hearing aids can stream phone calls, music, and podcasts from your phone directly to your ears, and with additional accessories, you can connect to other technology such as your TV and home entertainment systems.

How to Find a Professional

A hearing professional can test your hearing, help you understand the impact of ignoring your hearing loss, provide advice, answer questions, and describe the options that are available to you.

There are three different types of professionals available for different aspects of hearing health and treatment: audiologists, otolaryngologists (better known as ENT — ear, nose, and throat physician), and hearing instrument specialists/hearing aid dispensers.

Visit hearing.org to find hearing professionals available in your area.

¹⁰ "Relating Hearing Aid Use to Social and Emotional Loneliness in Older Adults." Barbara E. Weinstein, Lynn W. Sirow, Sarah Moser. Am J Audiol. 2016 Mar; 25(1): 54–61. doi: 10.1044/2015_AJA-15-0055

¹¹ Tehranchi, Kian; Jeyakumar, Anita* Hearing Loss's Incidence and Impact on Employment in the United States, Otolology & Neurology: August 2020 - Volume 41 - Issue 7 - p 916-921 doi: 10.1097/MAO.0000000000002683

¹² Eichwald J, Scinicariello F. Survey of Teen Noise Exposure and Efforts to Protect Hearing at School — United States, 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69:1822–1826. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6948a5external.icon>.

¹³ Ruberg, K. (2022). Untreated Disabling Hearing Loss Costs Billions – in the US and the Rest of the World. Retrieved 20 May 2022, from <https://hearingreview.com/practice-building/marketing/surveys-statistics/untreated-disabling-hearing-loss-costs-billions-us-rest-world#:~:text=Advocacy%20%26%20Research%20%7C%20May%202019%20Hearing%20Review&text=Applying%20the%20report%20methodology%20to,of%20%24133%20billion%20each%20year.>

¹⁴ Bisogno, A., Scarpa, A., Di Girolamo, S., De Luca, P., Cassandro, C., Viola, P., Ricciardiello, F., Greco, A., Vincentis, M., Ralli, M., & Di Stadio, A. (2021). Hearing Loss and Cognitive Impairment: Epidemiology, Common Pathophysiological Findings, and Treatment Considerations. Life (Basel, Switzerland), 11(10), 1102. <https://doi.org/10.3390/life1101102>

¹⁵ Livingston, Gill. "Dementia Prevention, Intervention, and Care: 2020 Report of the Lancet Commission." The Lancet, 14 Aug. 2020.