

# 7 Tips to help convince a loved one to have their hearing checked



 **HearingLife**

## Getting started

You likely have a family member or friend with hearing loss. Do you know someone who is always asking you to repeat things? Someone who keeps turning up the volume on the television? Someone who always asks you to speak more clearly? Someone who no longer takes part in family discussions?

If someone around you is faced with hearing loss, it's only natural to want to help. You may have noticed that many people do not readily accept their hearing loss or even realize that they have it. These people may be in a state of denial, and due to this, they may find your comments annoying. It's natural for them to be defensive because hearing loss can also be a sign of aging.

More than **80% of hearing loss can be corrected** with hearing aids, but it requires a hearing assessment\* for diagnosis.<sup>1</sup> This is the first step in the acceptance journey.

If you want to help a loved one through this process, here are some tips to help convince them to get started. After all, why miss out on daily activities and events, and most importantly, the ability to communicate with other people?



# 1 Hearing loss is a natural phenomenon often associated with aging.

It is recommended that everyone over the age of 60 should have their hearing assessed annually. Hearing loss varies from person to person.

Just as you schedule an annual physical with a doctor or have your eyes checked regularly by an optician, you should also have your hearing tested annually. This way, it's easier to monitor your hearing and address any changes that take place. This will help keep you healthy and in good physical shape. Hearing loss often occurs gradually without people realizing that it's happening. An annual hearing assessment is the best way to monitor changes and act on hearing loss as quickly as possible.

If your loved ones don't believe that they have a problem with their hearing, explain that the test is for everyone. It has a preventative purpose and is not just for people whose hearing loss has been diagnosed. This will make it easier to convince them to make an appointment.



## 2 **Untreated hearing loss may lead to other, more serious health conditions.**

People with hearing loss wait an average of seven years before consulting a hearing care expert to correct it.<sup>2</sup> Untreated hearing loss can lead to many other health problems.

### **Depression/Anxiety**

People with hearing loss are five times more likely to have feelings of depression.<sup>3</sup> Quality of life often deteriorates if people can no longer communicate and interact fully with the world around them. Relationships can become strained, and individuals may experience a sense of isolation.

### **Alzheimer's Disease**

People with moderate hearing loss are three times more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.<sup>4</sup> Hearing loss may lead to lowered mental stimulation, isolation, and cognitive decline. Hearing aids can help to support your brain function by keeping your brain active through the processing of sounds.

### **Cognitive Impairment**

Cognitive impairment is 24% more likely to develop in people with hearing loss than in people who hear well.<sup>5</sup> With untreated hearing loss, the brain gets overworked by straining to understand sound. Untreated hearing loss may also lead to social isolation, which in turn can lead to less stimuli. Both may lead to future cognitive impairment.

It is also important to note that, in almost all cases, untreated hearing loss deteriorates further over time. Hearing loss does not recover, it is irreversible.

Good hearing contributes to good cognitive health. As hearing deteriorates, so does a person's cognitive ability. The brain gets used to not fully dealing with words and sounds and loses its ability to do so. This information will help your loved one understand the value of having a quick and painless hearing assessment and making an appointment with a hearing care expert.

### 3 **Main objective: to help your loved one realize the importance of treating hearing loss and remove feelings of denial.**

Prepare your discussion points. People with hearing loss who do not want to have their hearing tested often have the same objections. Below are some common objections that will help you prepare an appropriate response:

***Objection #1: “I am too young to have hearing loss.”***

**Response:**

Anyone can experience hearing loss, regardless of age. It is true that hearing difficulties are often linked to the natural process of aging. Just as we talk about gradual loss of sight due to age, we talk about gradual loss of hearing due to age.

However, age is not the only explanation for hearing loss. At-risk occupations involving numerous repeated episodes of noise exposure can cause sensorineural hearing loss in people of all ages: it is the most common cause of hearing loss. Other sources of excess noise exposure include concerts, nightclubs, powerful household appliances or even firearms within a sports setting. The WHO estimates that 1.1 billion adolescents and young adults are at risk of hearing loss through the use of headphones and other devices, as well as noisy entertainment venues.<sup>6</sup>

***Objection #2: “Hearing aids require a lot of maintenance; it’s more of a hassle than a help.”***

**Response:**

Some people think that wearing a hearing aid will hamper their lifestyle or that it requires a lot of maintenance. This is not the case: the new generation of hearing aids offers lots of styles and different levels of technology. Discreet, nearly invisible devices are available as well as water-resistant hearing aids! And depending on the technology and size of the device, hearing aid batteries can last up to 14 days, and some are now rechargeable. It’s as easy as recharging your smartphone! Some people completely forget that they are wearing their hearing aids because they are perfectly suited to their lifestyles.

## 3 Continued

The lifetime of hearing aid batteries depends on the type of battery. Simply open your hearing aid and remove the battery, before replacing with a new one. Rechargeable batteries can be charged overnight while you sleep.

Be sure to attend the recommended hearing care appointments in order to maintain and check your hearing aids as needed. We recommend investing in new hearing aids every three to five years, or if you find your current hearing aids do not meet your hearing needs.

Visit our website, [hearinglife.com](http://hearinglife.com), and view helpful videos for more information on caring for your hearing aids.

### ***Objection #3: “Hearing aids don’t look attractive!”***

#### **Response:**

There are people who feel embarrassed about wearing hearing aids because they believe they make them look old or unattractive. In reality, hearing loss is much more visible than a hearing aid: always asking others to repeat themselves, accusing people of not speaking clearly, abandoning activities if you can no longer understand properly. Missing out on important life events and discussions is far more serious. What’s more, hearing aids have become increasingly discreet. In-the-ear hearing aids, for example, are tiny and almost invisible. A hearing care specialist will suggest hearing solutions to suit your needs, lifestyle and budget.

### ***Objection #4: “They are too expensive!”***

#### **Response:**

Hearing aids today are available in different price ranges and types of products. They are becoming increasingly discreet and offer many advanced and convenient features, including Bluetooth® connectivity. Your hearing care expert will suggest the hearing aids best suited to your situation and needs. There are financing options as well as possible insurance coverage. It’s easy to take care of your hearing and your health. Remaining intellectually active and communicating freely with those around you is essential.

## **4 Let your loved ones know that they are not alone.**

Support your loved ones.

Lots of information, articles and testimonials are available about hearing loss and the benefits of addressing it with hearing aids. Show some of these articles to your loved ones so they can see how other people have found the solution after having their hearing tested.

## **5 Take the opportunity to have your own hearing tested.**

If your loved one's hearing loss affects you, you will understand the importance of acting quickly by going to see a hearing care expert. Have a hearing assessment yourself. Until you take a test you can never be sure about your own hearing. Hearing loss occurs over time, and you may not notice it at first. If you go with your loved one and have a test as well, they will feel more comfortable about the process and will get through it more easily. They will be all the more grateful to you.

## **6 Include friends and family in the process.**

It is difficult to convince a loved one that they need a hearing assessment, especially if you are the only person saying so.

Other people can help you with this process, such as friends or family members. They can encourage your loved one to take a diagnostic test. Your loved one will be more likely to get a hearing assessment upon hearing multiple people voice their concerns.

# 7 Call a hearing care expert in your area and ask for advice.

Hearing care experts are used to helping people who are reluctant to undergo an assessment. They can offer you practical advice and information to help convince your loved one.

Don't let a loved one miss out on important events by letting hearing loss go untreated. Make an appointment at your nearest HearingLife center today. Visit **hearinglife.com** to book an appointment online, or call **888.892.0115**.

<sup>1</sup>Hearing Health Foundation. Hearing loss & tinnitus statistics. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://hearinghealthfoundation.org/hearing-loss-tinnitus-statistics>

<sup>2</sup>Do you think you have a hearing loss? Hearing Loss Association of America. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from [https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA\\_DoYouThinkYouHave\\_Hearing-Loss.p](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA_DoYouThinkYouHave_Hearing-Loss.p)

<sup>3</sup>Li C, Zhang X, Hoffman HJ, Cotch MF, Themann CL, Wilson MR. Hearing Impairment Associated with Depression in US Adults, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2005-2010. *JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg.* 2014;140(4):293–302. doi:10.1001/jamaoto.2014.42

<sup>4</sup>Lin FR, Metter EJ, O'Brien RJ, Resnick SM, Zonderman AB, Ferrucci L. Hearing Loss and Incident Dementia. *Arch Neurol.* 2011;68(2):214–220. doi:10.1001/archneurol.2010.362

<sup>5</sup>Lin FR, Yaffe K, Xia J, et al. Hearing Loss and Cognitive Decline in Older Adults. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2013;173(4):293–299. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2013.1868

<sup>6</sup>World Health Organization. 1.1 billion people at risk of hearing loss. Retrieved December 20, 2021, from <https://www.who.int/vietnam/news/detail/10-03-2015-1.1-billion-people-at-risk-of-hearing-loss>

