



You Are At Risk!

It's not cool when you can't hear

It's no secret that today's society exposes us all to a lot of noise. Exposure to excessively loud levels of noise can't always be avoided, but we can do things to prevent damage to our ears. Recent studies have shown an increased incidence of hearing loss among grade school students and musicians. At work and home we can be subject to levels of noise that threaten our hearing. Power tools, factory noises, fireworks, and of course loud music, are all potential sources of noise that can cause irreversible inner ear damage.

At first, the hearing loss may only be temporary, with hearing returning to normal after several hours or days. But, if exposure occurs repeatedly the ears will eventually lose their ability to bounce back, resulting in permanent hearing degeneration.

Safe Sound

Many people don't think twice about getting their eyes examined on a regular basis, readily purchasing glasses or contact lenses if necessary, and yet neglecting to take care of their ears. While hearing loss might not be as noticeable as sight degeneration in the earliest stages, the long-term damage can be more severe if left unchecked. What's more, many people don't realize that their increasing communication problems are caused by their own inability to clearly understand others, leading to misdirected irritability, anger and frustration.

One way to reduce hearing damage is by paying attention to noise levels and realizing when they are too high. According to the United States Safety and Health Standards, workers should not be exposed to more than 90 dB over a period of eight hours. Most audiologists would like to see that standard modified to 85 dB. If you work in a noisy environment, check out the decibel level you are being exposed to and take the proper precautions. Have your hearing evaluated at least once a year by a hearing health professional. Turn down the volume, or remove yourself from the noise area when possible. Give your ears a rest for 24 hours after exposure to dangerous levels of noise, and get yourself some hearing protection.

Protect Your Hearing

A variety of ear protection devices are available today. Over-the-counter earplugs can be purchased at most drugstores and shooting supply stores. They range from foam variety to rubber, silicone, and wax. They're all affordable, comfortable, disposable, and provide important help in reducing the dangers of exposure to excessive levels of noise.