

Spring Update

Assistive Listening Devices: More Than Just Hearing Aids

Have you ever attended a performance and found yourself struggling to hear despite wearing hearing aids? Did you know that there are devices available called assistive listening devices (ALDs) which allow better hearing in noisy and reverberant places, such as theaters. They do this by increasing the incoming sound without increasing the background noise. ALDs can be used in live performances, movies, shows, lectures and guided tours.

So how do you go about using an ALD at a facility? Simply ask if one is available! There is typically no charge for the use of an ALD. Some facilities may ask for a deposit which is refunded when the device is returned.

ALDs are made up of two parts: a transmitter which picks up the sound and changes it into a signal and then sends out this signal. The second part is a receiver which picks up the signal and transmits it to the person. You will be using the receiver and this is the device you will ask for.

ALDs can be used with and without hearing aids, depending on which system is utilized. One system is an inductive or audio loop system which uses an electromagnetic field and is typically used with hearing aids. A signal is sent through a loop or wire installed around the listening area and hearing aids with telecoils can pick up this signal. The second one is a FM system which uses radio waves. The speaker wears both a microphone and transmitter while the listener wears a receiver, typically a headset. The third system is an infrared system which utilizes light waves. The receiver has to be in the transmitter's line of sight to work properly and also utilizes a headset.

Finding available ALDs is as easy as calling or checking out brochures or websites of various facilities. Also look for signs and symbols posted advertising the availability of ALDs. For more information on this topic, please contact one of the Doctors of Audiology at Professional Hearing Services.



In celebration of May is Better Hearing and Speech Month, Professional Hearing Services is encouraging everyone to donate old hearing aids to charitable organizations such as Hear Now or the Lions Foundations during the month of May. The donated hearing aids are utilized for those less fortunate and what a great way to celebrate a wonderful month! In addition, they can be used as a tax write-off. Include your name and return address so a receipt can be mailed to you.

To donate to the Lion's you can utilize the eyeglass drop stations or you can send them to: WLF Hearing Program, 3824 County Rd A., Rosholt, WI, 54473.

To donate to Hear Now, please send hearing aids to: Hear Now Program Donation, 6700 Washington Ave. S., Eden Prairie, MN 55344.

Jennifer Johnson Earns Doctorate

Dr. Jennifer Johnson has been a member of our staff for the past 5 years. We are pleased to announce that she has successfully completed the requirements to receive her Doctorate of Audiology degree. Dr. Johnson received her undergraduate degree in speech and hearing sciences from the University of Iowa, her master's degree in audiology from the University of Illinois, and her doctorate degree from A.T. Still University, Arizona School of Health Sciences, in March 2009.

The coursework consisted of pharmacology, anatomy and physiology, tinnitus, vestibular testing, and auditory processing disorders.

"Completing my doctorate degree has helped me to become more knowledgeable in the field of audiology and has helped me to provide better care to my patients," says Johnson. We would like to congratulate her on receiving her doctorate. All of the audiologists at Professional Hearing Services have now received their doctorate of Audiology.





Speechreading-An Aid to Effective Communication

Speechreading (a more comprehensive form of lipreading) can be an effective communication strategy for people with hearing loss. Speechreading is a method of using visual clues from a speaker's face as well as the speaker's body language, context of the conversation and language cues to decode the content of spoken language. We all speechread to some extent, but many people with hearing loss rely on it to provide a percentage of their communication. Combining your residual hearing, amplification, and speechreading in efficient ways provides the greatest bridge to better receptive communication.

Many of the sounds that are most difficult for people with hearing loss to hear are the easiest to see; conversely, those sounds which are the most difficult to see (or to distinguish visually) are the easiest to hear. Vision and hearing, therefore are considered complementary channels; each of these separate channels is more efficient in transmitting different verbal information. This is a very important concept that deserves elaboration. Most people with hearing loss show a greater degree of hearing impairment in the higher frequencies than in the lower frequencies. It is, however, just at these high frequencies that most of the energy of the consonants of speech are located, particularly the voiceless consonants (such as: "t" rather than "d"; "f" rather than "v"; or "s" rather than "z"). Now we have long known that it is more important to hear the consonants than the vowels in order to fully understand speech. This is why people with high frequency hearing losses complain that they can "hear" but not "understand" (because they can indeed hear the vowels, but have difficulty perceiving the consonants.). But if you consider how most of these consonants are produced, you can see that many of the ones that are quite difficult to hear can be seen by watching the speaker's lips.

Stand in front of a mirror and make the following sounds while watching your mouth: "**f**" as in "fast"; "**th**" as in thought"; "**sh**" as in "shut"; "**s**" as in "sam"; "**p**" as in "put"; "**ch**" as in "chance". These are some of the sounds in our language that are difficult to hear because they are high pitched and they are soft sounds. The good news is that these sounds are all very visible if you watch for them.

If you would like to learn more about speechreading contact Professional Hearing Services. We have more printed information on this topic.

Professional Hearing Services is now offering a Battery Club!
Get one free pack of batteries for every 5 packs purchased (this offers
pertains to six-packs of batteries)

We can ship them to your home for an additional \$2.00 fee.

