

Hillcrest Hearing News[®]

A newsletter for our patients, their families and friends



Summer 2010

About Those Hearing Aid Ads

You may have noticed a lot of hearing aid advertisements and even received mailings these days offering "discount" prices, free hearing tests, free hearing aid cleaning and more.

Good hearing healthcare

Effective hearing healthcare is more than just purchasing hearing aids. You're also choosing your hearing care provider, and we appreciate that you've chosen us. Comprehensive hearing healthcare includes the following:

- ◆ A complete audiologic evaluation to rule out medical causes, and physician referral if appropriate. Testing should include pure tone and speech recognition testing.
- ◆ A comprehensive explanation of the different hearing aid styles, features, and levels of technology, along with the costs involved.
- ◆ A discussion of what you can expect from your hearing aids.
- ◆ A plan for follow-up care. Follow-up visits are a crucial part of good hearing care and help ensure that you're hearing as well as possible.
- ◆ An explanation of the various assistive listening devices available to help you hear in special situations, such as with telephone, television and theater.

Remember, you're not just choosing hearing aids. You're choosing your hearing healthcare provider. We appreciate the confidence you place in us.

Did You Know?

- ✓ A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
- ✓ The first portable hearing aids appeared in the 1930s, weighing in at about 2 1/2 pounds! A modern hearing aid weighs less than an ounce.
- ✓ Women blink almost twice as much as men.
- ✓ Most hotels and theatres have assistive listening devices available if you ask for them.

Update: The "Welcome to Medicare" exam includes several health care screenings. It's available to new beneficiaries and must be done within the first 12 months of the initial coverage period.

The Audiogram: A Guide to Your Hearing

When we test your hearing, the first part of the examination is usually a test of your hearing sensitivity. We use different tones, from low-pitched to high-pitched, to determine the softest level at which you can hear various sounds.

The results of the hearing test are plotted on an *audiogram* (see below). The audiogram shows pitch across the top, from low-frequency (on the left side) to high-frequency (on the right). The loudness is shown vertically, from very soft (at the top) to very loud (at the bottom).

The colors indicate when a person's hearing sensitivity should cause *no hearing difficulties* (green), *occasional difficulties* (yellow) and *frequent difficulties* (red). The shaded area of the audiogram shows the range of speech sounds.

The audiogram below also shows the results of a hearing test of someone with a high-frequency loss in the right ear and a mild to moderate loss in the left ear.

This person has normal hearing in the right ear for many sounds (thresholds are in the green area). However, he does have a mild hearing loss for high frequencies (thresholds are in the yellow area). This is a common pattern for people who gradually develop hearing loss over many years.

This person will hear many—even *most*—of the sounds around him. But because the clarity of speech comes from high-pitched sounds, sometimes speech may sound unclear or mumbled. He may say, "I can hear when someone talks, but I can't always understand the words." This pattern of hearing loss very often goes undetected, especially by the person with the loss, because the hearing difficulties seem inconsistent.

That's because many sounds, background noise, and the loudness of

speech may still seem normal. Listening to one person in a quiet setting may be relatively easy. However, he or she will have noticeable difficulties if unable to see the person talking, is in a noisy room, or if several people are talking.

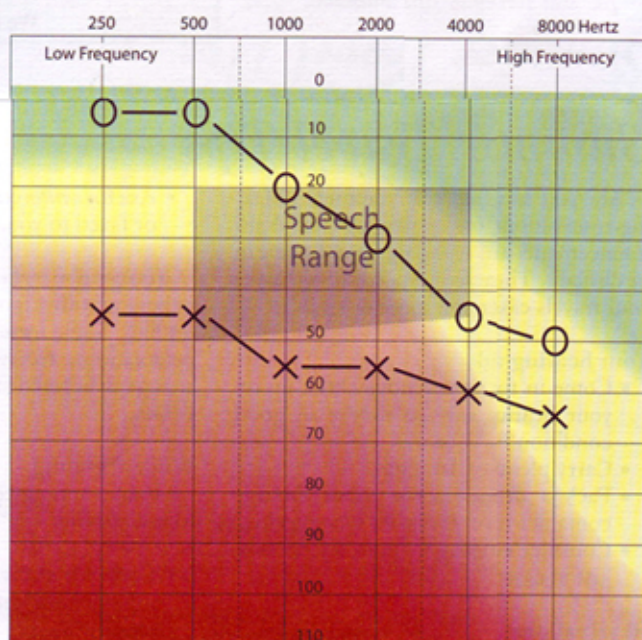
What kind of difficulties? This person will still hear most of conversational speech, but words like *care*, *share* and *fair* may sound the same because he or she doesn't hear the first consonant of those words.

In the left ear, this person may be unable even to *hear* speech unless it is amplified. Someone with hearing such as this in both ears might not even know when someone is talking. Using the telephone is a problem, and television has to be much louder than normal.

Your own hearing pattern is different than this example, of course. Knowing your own hearing pattern can help you understand your specific hearing problems. Is a woman's voice harder to understand than a man's? Can you understand in a quiet setting, but not in a noisy one? Do you do better on a telephone than face-to-face?

We would be happy to review your hearing pattern with you during your next visit.

SPEECH RANGE AUDIOGRAM



Hearing thresholds in the green area suggest the person should have no unusual hearing difficulties. Thresholds in the yellow area suggest occasional hearing difficulties, while someone with hearing in the red area will have difficulties in most settings. (O—O = right ear; X—X = left ear)

To Our Valued Patients

Thank you for the trust and confidence you have placed in us as we work together to raise awareness about the serious impact untreated hearing loss has on an individual's quality of life.

In order to better reflect the comprehensive services that our practice provides, our name has been changed to **HILLCREST HEARING AIDS & BALANCE CENTER**. The medical practice that we are a division of has also changed their name to **SOUTHWEST OHIO ENT SPECIALISTS, INC.**, formerly known as Dayton Head & Neck Surgeons. There are 13 board certified physicians and 19 audiologists and hearing instruments specialists available in 6 convenient locations to serve all of your hearing health care needs. Additional Specialty divisions include, The Kooser Program, The Blaine Block Institute of Voice Analysis, ENT Allergy, and Diagnostic CT Scans. Pass this newsletter on to your friends and loved ones, so that they too can improve the quality of their life with better hearing.

Sincerely,

The Audiologists, Dispensers and Staff of Hillcrest Hearing Aids & Balance Center

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1861 Towne Park Drive, #H Troy, OH 45373 (937) 222-0022	1189 Wayne Avenue Greenville, OH 45331 (937) 222-0022
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We now accept used hearing aid batteries for recycling.

Summer Travel Tips

Are you traveling this summer? Making reservations, understanding public announcements and using the telephone can be difficult. These suggestions should make your travels easier and more enjoyable:

Your hearing aids

- Come in for a preventive check-up on your hearing aids so they're in good condition for your trip.
- Carry plenty of batteries.
- Pack a dri-aid kit or other durable container to protect your hearing aids.
- Consider carrying a spare set of aids, just in case.

Reservations

- Let the reservation agent know you have a hearing loss.
- Repeat the information so the agent can confirm the details.

- Ask for *written* confirmation to be mailed or faxed to you.

You can also make your travel reservations in person with a travel agent or by yourself on-line. Some travelers go on-line to make reservations, receive notification of any change in schedule and pre-print boarding passes.

While traveling

Public announcements can be difficult to understand.

- Look for the video screens that post information on gates and departure times.
- If you're concerned about hearing announcements, let the agent at the boarding gate know you have a hearing loss.

- Telephones with built-in amplifiers are usually available in bus, train and airport terminals. Most public telephones are hearing aid-compatible. It's still a good idea to carry a portable amplifier—or be sure to have a good cell phone with you.

Hotels

- Most hotels and cruise ships provide assistive devices, such as amplified telephones and alerting devices for smoke and fire alarms.
- Televisions usually have built-in captioning that you can turn on. You may want to carry your own assistive devices since you'll be more familiar with them.
- Let someone at the front desk know you have a hearing loss in case of emergency.

Have a good trip!