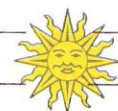


Hillcrest HealthCare News[®]

A newsletter for our patients, their families and friends



Summer 2015

Time To Use FaceTime?

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone to help people with hearing loss. Ironically, the telephone can be a challenge for the following group: people with hearing loss.

There are many ways to use the phone, some of them quite different from what anyone might have imagined a few years ago. Telephone amplifiers and telecoils built into your hearing aids have been available for many years. Newer approaches include wireless streaming, live captioning, and relay (voice-to-text translation through a third party).

Each method has its own advantages. Wireless streaming sends the phone signal to both hearing aids. This allows you to take advantage of binaural hearing. Captioning sends a text of the speech you're hearing. This adds visual cues (the written text).

Can you combine these advantages?

If you use a smart phone or tablet (such as an iPhone or iPad), there are a number of applications that allow you to see the person you're talking with. The best known are *Skype* and *FaceTime*.

With *Skype* and *FaceTime*, you both see and hear (with both ears) the person talking. The visual cues and use of binaural hearing should maximize your speech understanding.

A recent study reported just that. A group of individuals with severe hearing loss were asked to listen to speech over the phone under different conditions. The conditions included listening with a hearing aid telecoil (with and without *Skype* or *FaceTime*) and when wirelessly streamed to their hearing aids (with and without *Skype* or *FaceTime*).

Under all conditions, communicating with the speaker's visual image provided every listener much improved speech understanding. The average scores without the visual cues: 48%. With the visual cues provided by *Skype* or *FaceTime*: 71%.

Some individuals were only able to use the phone with the visual cues. The greatest benefit was for individuals who reported the most difficulty using the phone.

Do you *have* to use *FaceTime* or a similar technique? Probably not. Is it always possible to use? Certainly not. But it is a method you can use when you want to make it much easier to have a phone conversation.

Did You Know?

Cats, with their highly directional hearing, have 32 muscles in each ear.

How Well Should I Hear?

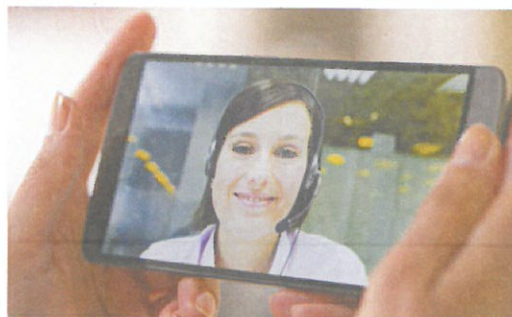
Hearing loss is a serious problem that deserves professional care. A hearing loss can be a barrier between you and your family and friends, make it more difficult in the workplace, and interfere in the classroom. It can also drain you of energy as you work to understand the people around you.

Since you're reading this newsletter, you're probably someone who decided to do something about your hearing loss. Surprisingly, *most people with hearing loss do nothing about it!*

Once someone seeks help, what factors determine how well he or she will do? The hearing loss itself is important, of course, but other factors may be even more important. These include a person's personality, hearing needs, choice of provider, choice of hearing aids and family support.

Personality

Are you easy-going or demanding? Do you look at the glass as half-full ("I can hear pretty well most of the time,") or half-empty ("Something's wrong! I can't hear everyone when I'm with a group of five or six people"). Do you "take charge" of your hearing problems or do you look to the experts to solve your hearing problems?



Phone conversations are much easier when you can both see and hear the person on the other end of the line.

Male/Female Differences

According to a Harris poll, men are more likely than women to have hearing loss—and more likely to seek help. Of those who know they have hearing loss, 37% of men and 57% of women have not sought treatment.

Men are also more likely to feel that hearing loss has adversely affected the relationship with their spouse. On the other hand, women are more likely to feel their hearing loss has negatively affected relationships with other family members (other than their spouse).

Other research suggests that hearing loss is one of the most common untreated problems in women over the age of 50.

The person who acknowledges his or her hearing loss has chosen the most productive approach. Instead of wasting energy trying to hide the problem, this person concentrates on making sure he or she is hearing as well as possible.

Hearing needs

Some people simply want their hearing to be "good enough" most of the time. It may make sense for this person to make compromises in their hearing health care.

For the person who wants to hear as well as possible, it's crucial to get the most suitable style of hearing aids and the appropriate level of technology. In almost all cases, two aids are better than one. And hearing aids aren't the only source of hearing help.

For example, *lipreading* can be as helpful as a third hearing aid (and a lot less expensive!). *Telephone* and *television amplifiers* and streaming devices for telephone, television and remote microphones can provide tremendous help.

Your hearing health care provider

Perhaps your most important decision is your choice of hearing health care provider. Our goal is to work with you to evaluate your hearing and hearing needs, help you make informed decisions about the best hearing help (such as hearing aids), and then work with you to make sure you're hearing as well as possible. Our role is to provide better hearing, not simply sell hearing aids.

Family and friends

One of the most important factors in your success is the support and understanding of your family and friends. After all, your hearing loss affects them almost as much as it affects you. The more they know and understand about your hearing loss, the better it is for everyone.

These are some of the factors we consider as we work with you toward one goal: *hearing as well as possible.*

Protect Your Ears

Will you be spending time in the sun this summer?

Be sure to include your ears when you put on that sunscreen. Ears are a common site for skin cancer. And include the back of the ear, where a third of ear skin cancers occur.

Summer Travel Tips

Are you traveling this summer? Some things to keep in mind:

Reservations

If you can, make your reservations on-line so hearing is not an issue. If you're making reservations over the phone:

- Let the agent know you have a hearing loss.
- Repeat the information.
- Ask for a *written* confirmation.

Before your trip

- Come in for a hearing aid check-up.
- Pack a dri-aid kit or other durable container to protect your hearing aids.
- Consider carrying a spare set of hearing aids just in case.

Planes and Trains

- Public announcements can be difficult to

understand. Look for video monitors that post information about gates and departure times.

- Consider letting the boarding gate agent know you have a hearing loss.

Hotels

- Most hotels and cruise ships provide assistive devices, including smoke and fire alarms.
- At a hotel or on a cruise ship, let someone at the front desk know you have a hearing loss in case of emergency.
- Television sets usually have built-in captioning that you can turn on.

The New York Times on Hearing Loss

Hearing loss has been described by health experts as "*a hidden disability, often not obvious to others or even to those who have it.*"

New York Times health columnist Jane Brody described adult hearing loss as "*perhaps the nation's most damaging and costly sensory handicap. Its onset is usually insidious, worsening over years and thus easily ignored.*"

According to a number of studies, persons with *untreated* hearing loss "*are likely to become frustrated and socially isolated. That isolation has been linked to depression.*"

The good news is that hearing aids can prevent, minimize, or reverse the negative effects of untreated loss. Hearing aids reduce the tension, anxiety and even depression that hearing loss can cause. These benefits have been well documented by research. As one researcher put it:

"Hearing aids are very successful treatments for reversing the effects caused by hearing i ."



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Hear The Sounds Of Summer

The sounds of summer are finally here. Birds are singing, thunderstorms are rumbling, and kids are once again cracking bats on the ball field. However, if you struggle to hear the sounds of summer, please call us to schedule an appointment for your hearing health.

We will work with you to discover what you may be missing and what options would work best for you. As a division of Southwest Ohio ENT Specialists, Hillcrest's board of certified physicians, licensed audiologists, and experienced staff work as a clinical team to diagnose your hearing loss and recommend the best treatment to meet your unique needs.

Learn more at our web site or call (937) 999-2314 to schedule your appointment.

Sincerely,

The Audiologists, Dispensers and Staff of Hillcrest Hearing & Balance Center
Appointments: (937) 999-2314 • Visit us at www.hillcresthearing.com

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