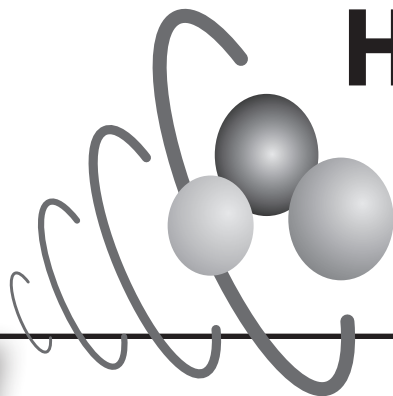


North Shore Chapter of Long Island

February 2012



Hearing Loss Association of America

Meeting Location

Long Island Jewish Hearing & Speech Center is located on the grounds of the Long Island Jewish Medical Center. Enter the grounds from LAKEVILLE ROAD and it is the first building on your left. Free parking is available behind the hearing and speech building: first entrance to parking lot after building. DO NOT go into the main parking building. Go to the Conference room on the Lower Level 270-05 76th Avenue New Hyde Park, NY 11040.

If you are in doubt as to whether there is a meeting, or if you'd like further information, please call Sal: 718-479-1098.

FYI

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) are provided at our meetings. Headphones are available in the back. This room is Looped, so those who have hearing aids/cochlear implants can put on their T-coil switch.

Meeting News February 15, 2012

Refreshments and Social Time begins at 6:30pm

Meeting begins at 7:00pm

Topic:

Ask The Audiologist

Speaker: Jennifer Weitz, Au.D

You read the "Ask the Audiologist" column in our newsletter each month; now you can meet her in person at our next meeting! Get to ask Jennifer Weitz, Au.D, the questions you keep meaning to send in.

Jennifer Weitz, Au.D, received her Bachelors of Arts degree in 2003 at the University of Albany, SUNY. She completed her clinical fellowship year at Ear, Nose and Throat Associates of South Florida in their Boca Raton and Boynton Beach offices where she performed audiological and vestibular assessments as well as dispensed hearing aids. Dr. Weitz received her Doctorate of Audiology degree from the Long Island Doctor of Audiology Consortium at St. John's, Hofstra and Adelphi Universities in May 2011.

Dr. Weitz has been dispensing hearing aids since 2008 and is currently state licensed as an Audiologist in both New York and Florida. She is Certified in Clinical Competence in Audiology (CCC-A) by the American Speech and Hearing Association. She specializes in audiological and vestibular evaluations for patients across the life span from the pediatric to geriatric population. Her main areas of interest are dizziness and balance disorders of the inner ear and tinnitus.



Hearing Loss Association of America

Chapter Planning Committee

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endorse the opinions of our
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FCC Quiets Persistent Problem Of Television Age – Loud Commercials – By Adopting Rules To Reduce Volume

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today took a major step toward eliminating one of the most persistent problems of the television age – loud commercials. The Commission adopted a Report and Order that implements the 2010 Commercial Advertisement Loudness Mitigation Act (the CALM Act), in which Congress gave the Commission, for the first time, authority to address the problem of excessive commercial loudness.

The rules adopted today require that commercials have the same average volume as the programs they accompany. The rules also establish simple, practical ways for stations and MVPDs to demonstrate their compliance with the rules. They carry out Congress' mandate to give viewers relief from overloud commercials while avoiding unnecessary burdens on television stations and MVPDs.

As the CALM Act requires, the rules will become effective one year after the date of their adoption, or December 13, 2012. This gives stations and MVPDs until this date to be in full compliance. Equally important, it provides ample time for programmers and networks to provide their distributors with certifications stating the commercials that accompany their programming are fully compliant with these rules. These certifications, though not mandatory, will simplify the safe harbor process for all stations and MVPDs. While consumer complaints about loud commercials have diminished since 2009, we expect that these new rules will reduce loudness complaints still further.

For further information, contact Lyle Elder (202-418-2120; lyle.elder@fcc.gov). Press contact: Janice Wise (202-418-8165; janice.wise@fcc.gov).

You can still get a free Caption Call phone!

Don't miss this opportunity!
Contact Cameron Tingey at:
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Tips For Friends And Relatives Of The Hard Of Hearing

DO:

- Wait until the hearing impaired person can see you before speaking. It is helpful to touch the person to get his attention (A tap on the shoulder, a wave, or another visual signal usually does the trick).
- Situate yourself in a well-lit area so the listener can see your face clearly.
- Reduce background or competing noise by offering to move to a more quiet setting.
- Use gestures to help the communication process by swinging your hands around, but not so wildly that it is distracting.
- Be patient and take time to communicate. Saying “never mind” or “it’s not important,” causes the person with hearing loss to feel they are not important.
- Be aware of fatigue. People who are Hard of Hearing must work harder to communicate, and this can be extremely tiring.
- If your family member is a new hearing aid user, motivate them to use their aids as often as possible.
- Know how to correctly clean your family member’s hearing instruments and how to change the battery.



DON'T:

- Speak from another room or while walking away.
- Speak directly into the person’s ear (this distorts the message and hides visual cues).
- Shout. This may distort the message. Just because a person can hear your voice, does not mean they can understand your words.
- Repeat the statement if it is not understood. It is better rephrase the statement and to use different words.

Deaf Scientist’s Research May Save Others From Losing Their Hearing The Way He Did

David Kirkwood December 7, 2011

PORTLAND, OR—As a 14-month-old baby in England, Peter Steyger suddenly lost his hearing, the result of an antibiotic given to him to treat meningitis. Now, 48 years later, as a scientist at the Oregon Hearing Research Center at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), he may have discovered exactly how aminoglycosides, the class of antibiotics that caused his deafness.

In a study published last month in *Scientific Reports*, Steyger and his OHSU colleague Hongzhe Li offer an explanation of how aminoglycoside antibiotics are able to kill the hair cells in the inner ear that enable people to hear. Normally, they explain, a “blood-labyrinth” barrier prevents potentially damaging components in the blood from entering the inner ear. However, Steyger and Li’s research indicates that these antibiotics foil the barrier and reach the inner ear via pathways that are designed to admit minerals and nutrients needed for auditory function.

If the authors are correct about how these ototoxic medications are able to kill hair cells, then scientists can try to identify the mechanism that allows them to cross the blood-labyrinth barrier and find a way to prevent this from occurring. For example, said Steyger in an interview for the online publication *Science Newsline Medicine*, “We could give

Continued on Page 4

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an inhibitor at the same time as the antibiotics that will protect the ear, but still allow the drug to kill bacteria, thereby saving the patient's hearing."

Steyger and his lab have already begun researching the precise molecular mechanisms by which aminoglycoside antibiotics (and other ototoxic drugs) cross the blood-labyrinth barrier. They hope what they learn will lead to the development of effective strategies to prevent drug-induced hearing loss.

If an effective blocker is found that enables aminoglycoside antibiotics to be used safely, Steyger estimates that it would save the hearing of up to 50,000 people a year in the United States alone, most of them prematurely born infants. He noted that about 80% of these newborns are given aminoglycoside antibiotics to prevent infections that would otherwise kill them.

In addition, the same type of antibiotics is also used to treat people with tuberculosis, mostly in developing countries.

Steyger, who holds a PhD in hearing research from Keele University in the UK, is an associate professor of otolaryngology/head and neck surgery at the Oregon Hearing Research Center. His study was funded by the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communications Disorders.

Men Hear Better Than Women – At Parties

Hörakustik, 9/2011, www.sciencedaily.com

Men are more capable of separating relevant sounds from background noise at parties, a German study has found. The reason may be that in the early days of humanity men were the ones who went hunting for food.

Many of us know the situation; at a party you would like to talk to a person but this can be quite exhausting due to the background noise. The words of your conversation partner are drowned out by the conversation of others and the music. We have to concentrate on the voice of the person we are talking to and separate the relevant sounds from the background noise. Our attention system is therefore highly stressed. This is known as "the cocktail party phenomenon."

German researchers have found that men hear better at parties and are more capable of separating relevant sounds from the background noise.

Natural Selection And Evolution

The researchers from the Neurological Clinic of the University Hospital and the Hertie Institute for Clinical Brain Research (HIH) in Tübingen, Germany, found that the audio-spatial abilities of men are more highly developed than those of women. The researchers think that men's ability to hear better at parties may be due to the different evolutionary requirements of the sexes. Over time men have developed these spatial abilities as a result of natural and sexual selection throughout human evolution.

"Men were the ones who hunted for food. Here, attention performance was extremely important. Thus prey could be localised by noise before it could be seen," said Ida Zündorf and Prof. Hans Otto Karnath from the University Hospital in Tübingen.

The Study

In the study, the participants were asked to listen to sounds and determine the location of the sound source. In a first test, sounds were presented one at a time and both women and men accomplished the task with great accuracy. In a further test, several sounds were presented at the same time and the participants had to focus on and localise only one sound. The latter was much more difficult for women. In some cases women even thought that the sounds were coming from the opposite direction.



Better Hearing Institute Warns on Do-it-yourself Hearing Care



The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) is warning consumers of the inherent risks associated with purchasing over-the-counter, one-size-fits-all hearing aids instead of consulting a hearing healthcare professional. Hearing loss is sometimes the symptom of a serious underlying medical problem. All 50 states require that consumers use a credentialed hearing care professional to purchase hearing aids.

BHI also points out that hearing devices that are purchased over-the-counter or Internet without the consultation of

a hearing healthcare professional may result in the devices not being accurately customized to the specific hearing needs of the individual.

"Today's state-of-the-art hearing aids should be programmed to the individual's specific hearing loss requirements in order to provide good levels of benefit and customer satisfaction," says Sergei Kochkin, BHI's Executive Director. "The process requires a complete in-person hearing assessment in a sound booth, the training and skills of a credentialed hearing healthcare professional in order to prescriptively fit the hearing aids using sophisticated computer programs, and appropriate in-person follow-up and counseling. This is not possible when consumers purchase one-size-fits-all hearing aids over the Internet or elsewhere."

Extensive research shows that individualized hearing health assessments and fittings programmed specific to the needs of the hearing aid user provide the best chance for optimal hearing enhancement and customer satisfaction.

"The best advice BHI can give anyone purchasing a hearing aid is to find a state credentialed hearing healthcare professional and to communicate openly during the evaluation, fitting and trial period to increase the likelihood that you are receiving the best possible benefit from your hearing aids," says Kochkin. "It will make a tremendous difference in your ability to hear and in your quality of life."

BHI has published a comprehensive consumer guide entitled, "Your Guide to Buying Hearing Aids." (See www.betterhearing.org under hearing loss treatment.) The guidelines give confidence to first-time hearing aid buyers by providing a detailed, step-by-step explanation of what to expect, ask, and look for when selecting and visiting a hearing healthcare professional and purchasing a hearing aid.

Continued on Page 6

BHI also has published, "Your Guide to Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids," the first comprehensive guide on how people can obtain financial assistance to purchase hearing aids.

More About Hearing Loss and Hearing Aids

The number of Americans with hearing loss has grown to more than 34 million—roughly 11 percent of the U.S. population. Over the past generation, hearing loss among Americans has increased at a rate of 160 percent of U.S. population growth and is one of the most commonly unaddressed health conditions in America today.

Numerous studies have linked untreated hearing loss to a wide range of physical and emotional conditions, including impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks, reduced alertness, increased risk of personal safety, irritability, negativism, anger, fatigue, tension, stress, depression, and diminished psychological and overall health.

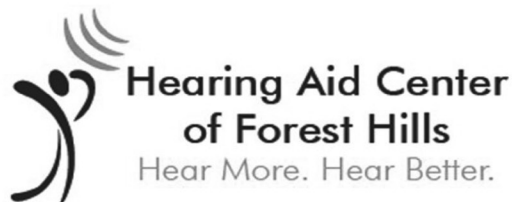
But the vast majority of people with hearing loss can benefit from hearing aids. In fact, eight out of ten hearing aid users report improvements in their quality of life, according to a survey by BHI of more than 2,000 consumers.

Advances in digital technology have dramatically improved hearing aids in recent years, making them smaller with better sound quality. Designs are modern, sleek, and discreet. Clarity, greater directionality, better speech audibility in a variety of environments, better cell phone compatibility, less whistling and feedback than hearing aids of the past, and greater ruggedness for active lifestyles are common features.

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