

February 2017



Hearing Loss Association of America

North Shore of Long Island Chapter

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: 516-331-0231.

Meeting News

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

**Refreshments and Social Time begins 6:30pm.
Meeting begins 7:00pm.**

Topic: EAS Cochlear Implants

Short for Electro-Acoustic Stimulation, this is new approach to cochlear implants allows individuals who were previously not implant candidates to be implanted with a soft, atraumatic electrode array in order to maintain residual hearing, even after implantation. The results of the data submitted to the FDA show that 97% of those implanted with MED-EL's soft electrode array maintained residual hearing after implantation, allowing them to benefit from a hearing aid as well as a cochlear implant, on the same ear. Please join us for this important presentation by Gina Greco and Kimberly Slocum, who provides outreach and clinical services to MED-EL's patients and candidates in the Northeast Region.

Speaker: Kimberly Slocum

Kimberly Slocum received her Doctorate in Audiology, Au.D., in 2010 from Syracuse University: Communication Sciences and Disorders. She was previously a clinical audiologist in Boston where she developed a passion for cochlear implants and audiologic rehabilitation. Dr. Slocum has been a Clinical Account Manager with MED-EL since 2014 where she works training clinicians on cochlear implants as well as MED-EL products and technology.

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Hearing Loss Association of America

North Shore of Long Island Chapter

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HLAA of North Shore Long Island does not necessarily endorse the opinions of our speakers, goods & services.

Could Anemia Cause Hearing Loss?

By HealthDay News

Hearing loss may be linked to iron deficiency anemia, a combination of low levels of iron and red blood cells, new research suggests.

The study found that people with iron deficiency anemia have more than twice the rate of hearing loss as people without the blood disorder.

The association between hearing loss and iron deficiency anemia was particularly strong for two types of hearing loss—one called sensorineural and combined sensorineural and conductive hearing loss.

Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when the inner ear or the nerve pathway from the inner ear to the brain is damaged, according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Conductive hearing loss is when sounds aren't efficiently conducted from the outer ear to the eardrum or middle ear. Combined hearing loss is a mixture of the two, according to ASHA.

Sensorineural hearing loss is generally considered permanent, ASHA reports. And, that's where this study comes in. If iron deficiency anemia plays a role in hearing loss, it's possible that correcting the condition might lead to improvements in hearing.

But, for now, researchers say it's too soon to tell if that would happen, and they aren't recommending that people with hearing loss get blood tests for anemia.

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January Meeting Recap

By Claudia Block

Our Wednesday, January 18 HLAA meeting was a collaborative effort that included both old and new faces. Those that attended listened and contributed to our group discussion on this cold January evening. Our topic was, “Inspect That Gadget;” and the purpose of this session was a discussion on the tips, tricks and gadgets work that best for people. Several members brought a variety of their personal hearing assist gadgets to the meeting. It reminded me of “show and tell” activities back in my early school days! Gadgets included alarm clocks, bed shakers, hearing loops and neck-loops, captioned phones, smart phone apps and a variety of personal FM units. It was interesting to see what different people use at home to help them cope better with hearing loss.

Not only did folks show their personal treasures but they also talked about the different ways they cope at work, in restaurants, in a loud environment, in cars, trains and at home. They shared ideas, gadgets and suggestions for getting through challenging “hearing times.” There were hearing catalogues from places like Hearmore and Harris Communications. Flipping through these catalogues, I was once again amazed to find that there were so many devices out there to help us out in difficult situations. These items included signaler systems, emergency alarms, loops and t-coils, alarm clocks, TV listeners, mobile phone accessories and personal amplifiers.

It was very comforting to hear that others with hearing loss have similar issues and it was quite interesting as well as informative to listen to others and to hear what others with hearing loss did to solve some of the more challenging issues, trying to make their lives better. It was good to find out about the plethora of assistive technology devices that are out there designed to help hearing impaired individuals communicate better at home, at work and at play!

We thank everyone that came out in the cold to our January meeting. It was a nice, informal forum to meet new people and to discuss and share ways to cope with hearing loss and to share with others the items that may help make our lives a little bit easier.

Meeting News, Continued from Page 1

Gina is a Teacher of the Deaf with 8 years of experience teaching children with hearing loss while also helping them attain their listening and spoken language goals. Gina received her undergraduate degree from Augustana College in Communication Sciences and Disorders and her Master’s degree in Early Intervention in Deaf Education from Fontbonne University in St. Louis, MO.

She is currently a Consumer Outreach Manager in the Northeast Region for MED-EL Corporation. As the MED-EL Outreach Manager for the NE, Gina travels the region reaching out to schools, communities and clinics that serve individuals with hearing loss. She provides information about hearing loss, technology and rehabilitation.

How Your Hearing Is Affected By Volume, and What the Damage Sounds Like

By Lori Mack, <http://wnpr.org>

As many young people try out the new headphones and earbuds they received as holiday gifts, doctors have a warning: they pose a potential health hazard. Studies show hearing loss among kids and teens is up about 30 percent higher than it was in the '80s and '90s.

Experts believe earphones are part of the problem. It's all about volume and time exposure. The louder the sound, the faster the damage to your hearing.

As a benchmark, a normal conversation is about 60 decibels—considered a safe level, not loud enough to cause damage. But increase it to 85 decibels, and that's about the volume of your vacuum cleaner. Now we've reached a critical level.

Michele Abrams, clinical audiologist at Southern Connecticut State University, explained the intensity-time tradeoff when sound is measured.

"When we think about decibel levels, when we think of loudness levels, it's really incremental," she said. "It's a logarithmic scale. It's not a linear scale. So we know that 85 db is that critical level. Eighty-five db, eight hours a day, that's your maximum. If it's 90 db—five db greater—you have to cut your time in half."

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“There is currently no evidence to confirm that treating iron deficiency anemia will improve hearing health,” said study author Kathleen Schieffer. She's a graduate student at the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine in Hershey, Pa.

The findings only show a possible connection between iron deficiency anemia and hearing loss, she said. They don't prove that one causes the other. Still, Schieffer said, the study authors want to understand whether treating the blood condition will help improve or prevent hearing loss, particularly since iron deficiency anemia is a common and treatable condition in the United States.

The study authors pointed out that the inner ear is very sensitive to changes in blood supply, so it's possible that the lack of oxygen in the blood of people with iron deficiency anemia might affect the inner ear. “The part of the inner ear affected by sensorineural hearing loss is supplied by only one artery, which makes it susceptible to damage if low oxygen is present,” Schieffer said.

For the new study, the researchers checked diagnoses of hearing loss in more than 300,000 U.S. adults from 2011 to 2015. They were between the ages of 21 and 90, with an average age of 50. Most were women. “Overall, 1.6 percent of the general population had hearing loss, while 3.4 percent of individuals with iron deficiency anemia had hearing loss,” Schieffer said.

When the researchers looked at the type of hearing loss, the overall risk for sensorineural hearing loss in someone with iron deficiency anemia was 82 percent higher than for someone without the blood condition. People with anemia had a 2.4 times greater risk of combined hearing loss than folks without anemia.

Dr. David Haynes, a professor of otolaryngology, neurosurgery and hearing and speech sciences at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, said “these and other studies should put iron deficiency on the radar as one of the factors that may be contributing to hearing loss. Other studies will be needed to confirm the findings, as in all medical research.”

As for why iron deficiency anemia might be connected to hearing loss, ear-nose-and-throat specialist Peter Steyger of Oregon Health & Science University's Oregon Hearing Research Center said several factors could be at play. “Iron is clearly required for normal functioning of the auditory system, as for many other organs, and too little can result in anemia, the loss of hemoglobin in red blood cells to carry oxygen to the tissues in the body,” he said.

Too little iron can also disrupt the workings of cells and even kill them, he said, leading to hearing loss if that happens to hair cells in the inner ear. “Unlike other organs,” he said, “once the sensory hair cells in the inner ear are damaged and die, they cannot be restored to restore auditory function.”

“A healthy well-balanced diet that meets the daily recommended intake of vitamins and other nutrients is crucial for everyone's general physical well-being, as well as for optimal hearing health,” he said.

The study was published Dec. 29 in the journal *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.



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Donation Information

HAAA Lakeland Chapter in Florida is sponsoring a Hearing Aid Recycling Program. The purpose of this program is to collect new/used hearing aids, clean/repair them, and offer them (at no cost) to those who are financially challenged in our community.

Hearing aids can be shipped in a small box. Carefully wrap the hearing aid in cotton, bubble wrap or other soft material, or put in a pill container.

First, fill out the form here: <http://www.hla-lakeland.org/donate/hearing-aid-donation> and print out the receipt you will get. Then mail the hearing aid(s) and the printed receipt to:

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How Your Hearing Is Affected By Volume, Continued from Page 4

Many smartphones, tablets, and music devices can generate maximum volume levels of over 100 decibels, loud enough to cause hearing problems after just 15 minutes a day.

The damage is caused when hair cells in the inner ear, which help transmit sound to the brain, are exposed to loud sounds. If you've ever been to a concert and experienced ringing in your ears afterwards, that's a sign of damage. Sometimes that damage is only temporary, but sometimes it's permanent.

Abrams said it all depends on how loud, how long, and how often. "Repeated exposure damages your hair cells," Abrams said. "It would be like walking on blades of grass and you step on the grass and the grass flattens, but it comes back up. And the more you do it, the more it stays down. And eventually it doesn't come back up, so it becomes permanent."

And earphones, because they're inserted directly into the ear canal, can be a little more problematic, according to Dr. Maryellen Flaherty-Hewitt, medical director for Pediatric Primary Care at Yale New Haven Children's Hospital. "The other issue with the earbuds is many of the teenagers are using what comes with their devices, which are not custom fit, so they allow in a lot of ambient noise, which then makes them turn the volume up," she said. "They want to block out the ambient noise, they turn the volume up, now it's at louder decibels."

The damage is usually gradual, but it's not just that you're hearing at a lower volume—sounds become muffled and distorted over time.

To continue reading, please go to <http://wnpr.org/post/how-your-hearing-affected-volume-and-what-damage-sounds>