

General Information for New Hearing Aid Users

This information leaflet will provide you with practical information and advice regarding your new hearing aid. There is lots of useful information enclosed, so it is important that you take time to read this leaflet in order to help you adapt to wearing your hearing aid.

Hearing & Balance Unit, Royal Gwent Hospital

Telephone Number: 01633 234 390

Audiology Department, Nevill Hall Hospital

Telephone Number: 01873—732 800

Audiology Department, Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr

Telephone Number: 01443 802 446

Fax Number

01633 656 299

Audiology Website: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/page/51984>

Getting Used to Your New Hearing Aid

The information from your hearing test has been used to create a prescription to programme your hearing aid with the correct level of volume. But it is normal for the hearing aid to sound strange at first. Hearing aids cannot give you perfect hearing, but they should help you hear every day sounds such as the phone ringing or the doorbell and help you to follow what people are saying much easier. You will find that one-to-one conversations, in a quiet environment, are a lot easier.

It can take a number of months for you to get used to the sound of the hearing aid.

Common reports are that your own voice will sound hollow, this is because you have been used to hearing your own voice with a hearing loss. As you get used to hearing your own voice through the microphone of the hearing aid, your own voice may sound quieter to others.



When you first start wearing your hearing aid you may be aware of everyday background noises that you have not been used to hearing, like kettles boiling or water running in the sink. You may find that these noises are distracting and make it difficult for you to focus on what you want to hear. This is quite normal and as you get used to wearing your hearing aid your brain will learn to filter them out, so you become less aware of them over time.



To help you get used to the sounds from your hearing aid, we normally recommend that you start wearing the hearing aid for just a couple of hours a day, in an environment that you feel comfortable in, such as around the house. This allows you some degree of control of the sound level that you experience. Once you feel comfortable wearing your hearing aid in this environment, it is important to increase the hours that you use the hearing aid, as well varying the situations that the hearing aid is worn. You should build up your usage of the aid over the next couple weeks/months.

Every time you use the hearing aid in a new situation you are exposed to lots of different sounds. It is important to continue to wear the hearing aid in order to adapt to these new sounds.

When you are used to the sound of the hearing aid, it is best to wear it as much as possible. This gives you the best chance of adapting to the sound of the aid. It is important to remember that it takes time to get used to wearing a hearing aid and everyone adapts to aided sound differently.

The only times you should not wear the hearing aid are when you go to bed and for any water-based activity (e.g. showering or swimming).

The way to adapt to a hearing aid quickly is to follow the 3 "Ps"

PRACTICE - PATIENCE - PERSEVERANCE

Using Your Aid in Noisy Places

In noisy places like high streets, pubs and restaurants, you may still find it difficult to follow what people are saying. Most hearing aids are designed to adjust automatically when there is a lot of noise but no hearing aid will completely eliminate background noise.

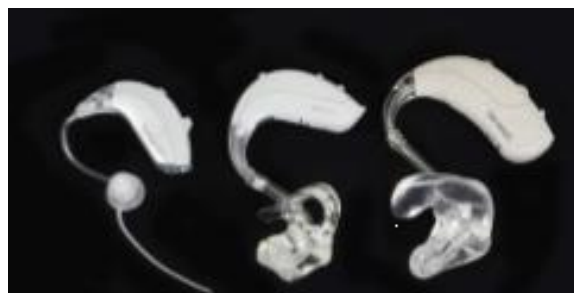
Even with the best hearing aid, some situations may still be very difficult. Here are some things that you can do to make it easier:

- Make sure the room is well lit and you can see the speaker's face.
- Ask the person to face you. Looking down or away, sitting where you cannot see their face can make it difficult to use any lip-reading skills that you may have adopted. You may be surprised at the number of clues you can pick up without realising it.
- Sit with your back to the worst of the noise and select a Noisy Environments program on your hearing aid (if applicable).
- Wearing an aid in both ears will help you focus better on what you want to listen to (if appropriate).
- Do not be afraid to ask someone to repeat or re-phrase what they have said.

Important Hearing Aid Information

Hearing Aid Controls

The NHS uses several different models of hearing aid, each with slightly different controls. Details of how your specific hearing aid works are found in the hearing aid's instruction sheet. If you do not have an instruction sheet, please ask an audiologist for one.



Data Logging

This is a system in the hearing aid that records your average hearing aid use per day, use of the various programmes and volume controls. This information can be used at follow up appointments in order to support you with your hearing aid use.

Lost or Damaged Hearing Aids

Welsh Assembly Government legislation exists which allows NHS hospitals to charge for hearing aids which are lost or damaged due to negligence. The current charge is set at £65.00 per hearing aid.

Replacement Batteries

Free replacement batteries are available from many clinics and hospitals throughout the area. Battery recycling facilities are also available at some clinics.



Please ask a member of staff for your nearest clinic.

A postal service is also available. You have been issued with a battery card which has details of your hearing aid and the type of batteries which it uses. You should post the card to the address given in the front of the card and we will send new batteries within 2 days of receipt of your request. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your batteries.

SAFETY NOTICE – HEARING AID BATTERIES

Ingestion of hearing aid batteries may result in serious injury or death. In the event of a hearing aid battery being swallowed, please seek urgent medical attention at your nearest Emergency department.



Hearing Aid Maintenance and Repairs

The clear plastic tube linking your hearing aid to the ear mould and the 'open ear fitting' need to be changed every 4-6 months. The tube needs changing when it becomes discolored and brittle. If you would like to retube the mould yourself, please ask an audiologist to show you.

In order to help you maintain your hearing aid, or if you have any issues or problems with your hearing aid, you should attend a repair session in order to discuss your problem.

The services provided at these repair sessions includes retubing the earmoulds, taking new impressions for earmoulds, checking and replacing faulty hearing aids and providing general advice about the care and maintenance of your hearing aid.

There are times when your reported problem cannot be resolved in the repair clinic. If this is the case it may be necessary to arrange an appointment with another member of staff to discuss the issues in more detail. If this is the case, we will advise you in the repair clinic. There are likely to be waiting lists for these appointments and you will be advised of the wait time.

We run repair clinics at the following sites without the need to make an appointment:

Hearing & Balance Unit, E Block
Royal Gwent Hospital
Monday – Friday: 9am – 12.45pm

Audiology Department
Nevill Hall Hospital
Monday – Friday: 9am – 12pm

Audiology Department - **Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr**

Monday: 9.00am -12.15pm and 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Tuesday: 9.00am-12.15pm and 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Thursday:9.00am -12.15pm

There are also weekly appointment-only repair clinics at Chepstow Community Hospital and Cwmbran Clinic. Please ring 01633 234390 to arrange an appointment.

Limited repair clinics also operate at Monnow Vale Health Centre. Please ring 01600 773113 to make an appointment this clinic.

It is advisable that you contact the department for a hearing test after 3 years.

Hear in your Community Volunteer Service **Free drop-in volunteer hearing aid clinics**



In addition to the services provided in the hospital, you may choose to be seen by one of our trained volunteers in the community. The aim of this service is to provide hearing aid maintenance closer to home. The services provided during these drop in clinics are:

- Replacement batteries and retubing
- Advice on how to clean and use your hearing aid
- Information on hearing loss services that can help you



HEAR IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Audiology Volunteer Service

Monthly drop in service	Day Each Month	Time
Abertillery – Ebenezer Baptist Church	4 th Thurs	10.30-12.30
Age Concern Torfaen, Griffithstown	1 st Wed	10:00 – 12:00
Blackwood Library	2 nd & Last Wed	10.00-12.00
Blaenavon Health Centre	3 rd Wed	10.00-12.00
Caerphilly Library	2 nd & 4 th Tues	09.30- 11.30
Caldicot Library	1 st Mon	11:00 – 13:00
Chepstow Library	4 th Monday	14.00- 16.00
Chepstow - Palmer Community Centre	2 nd Monday	14.00 -16.00
Cwmbran Library	2 nd Sat	11.30-13.30
Ebbw Vale –Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan	3 rd Fri	10.00-12.00
Monmouth - Library	2 nd Fri	11:30 – 13:30
Newport – Alway Centre	2 nd Wed	14.00-16.00
Rhymney Library	2 nd Fri	10.00-12.00
Risca Library	4 th Wed	14.00-16.00
Usk – Plas Mawr Housing	2 nd Wed	10.00-12.00
Ystrad Mynach Methodist Church	1 st Fri	10.30-12.30

Further Information and Support

Action on Hearing Loss, Cymru

16 Cathedral Road

Cardiff

CF11 9LJ

Telephone: 029 2033 3034

Textphone: 029 2033 3036

Fax: 029 2033 3035

Email: actiononhearinglosscymru@rnid.org.uk

C2Hear: 10 interactive multimedia videos that provide:

- Better knowledge of hearing aids and communication.
- Better hearing aid handling skills.
- Greater use of hearing aids for people who do not wear their hearing aids all of the time.
- Improved confidence and reassurance in using hearing aids and communicating.

For further information use the following internet website:

<http://www.hearing.nihr.ac.uk/research/c2Hearonline>

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**