



Hearing Loss & Communication Tips for Families

Holistic Hearing Solutions – Patient Information

Hearing loss does not only affect the person experiencing it. It can also influence everyday conversations, family interactions and social situations.

Many people with hearing loss say the most frustrating part is not hearing clearly during conversations — especially in noisy environments such as restaurants, family gatherings or meetings.

The good news is that small communication adjustments can make a significant difference for both the person with hearing difficulty and the people around them.

Common Signs of Hearing Loss

Often family members notice hearing changes before the person experiencing them. Signs may include:

- Asking people to repeat themselves frequently
- Difficulty hearing in restaurants or group conversations
- Turning the television volume up louder than others prefer
- Misunderstanding words or responding incorrectly
- Withdrawing from conversations or social situations
- Saying 'I can hear you, but I can't understand you'

Why Conversations Become Difficult

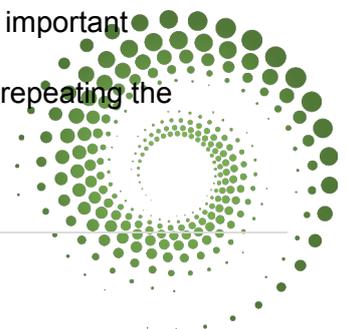
Hearing loss often affects the clarity of speech, particularly highfrequency sounds such as: **s, f, th, sh, ch**

These sounds carry important detail in speech. When they are harder to hear, voices may still be audible but words may not sound clear. Background noise can make communication even more challenging because the brain must work harder to separate speech from surrounding sounds.

Practical Communication Tips for Families

Small adjustments can make conversations easier and less frustrating for everyone.

- **Get attention first** – Say the person's name or gently tap their arm before speaking.
- **Face the person when talking** – Seeing facial expressions and lip movements helps the brain interpret speech.
- **Speak clearly, not loudly** – Shouting can distort speech. A natural, clear voice works best.
- **Reduce background noise** – Turn down the TV or move to a quieter area for important conversations.
- **Rephrase rather than repeat** – Try saying the sentence differently instead of repeating the same words.
- **Be patient** – Listening with hearing loss can be mentally tiring.





Supporting Someone with Hearing Loss

When hearing changes are identified early, many people experience meaningful improvements through:

- Communication strategies
- Hearing technology when appropriate
- Hearing rehabilitation
- Addressing ear or middle ear problems

When to Consider a Hearing Test

- Frequently asking others to repeat themselves
- Difficulty following conversations in background noise
- Group conversations becoming tiring
- Ringing or buzzing in the ears (tinnitus)
- Hearing people speaking but struggling to understand the words clearly

Helpful for families: Bringing a partner or family member to the hearing appointment can often help provide additional observations and improve understanding of the results.

