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IN THIS EDITION

Hearing Protection Tips For Fall

Check Out Our Website

October Is Audiology Awareness Month

Chemotherapy & Hearing Loss

The Effects of Hearing Loss
on the Spouse

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FALL NEWSLETTER

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CLINIC NEWS

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

We are proud to announce the launch of our new website, which went live on August 30. It is now more responsive, higher speed and has better navigation than ever before. Additionally, you can now find each of these newsletters under the "Our Practice" tab.

See for yourself!

Visit westcoasthearing.com



MEET OUR PROVIDER

Mark Scoones, Au.D.

is a board-certified audiologist granted by the American Board of Audiology. Dr. Scoones was a former board member for the Audiology Foundation of America and previously appointed by Washington State Governor to the Washington State Board of Hearing and Speech and served for seven years. Dr. Scoones is a retired Navy Captain with 35 years of Naval military service.



Dr. Scoones was born and raised in Montana. When not in the clinic, you may find him attending theatre events, on the golf course, cycling or landscaping and gardening at home.

HEARING PROTECTION TIPS FOR FALL

Prolonged exposure to the sounds of leaf blowers, power tools, motorized vehicles, sporting events and concerts can all lead to irreversible hearing damage. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to keep your ears safe and prevent permanent hearing loss.

Leave the leaf blowing to the professionals.

Leaf blowers become a necessity once fall is in full swing, but they represent an extreme noise hazard and are better left to the professionals. The sound produced by some leaf blowers at close range can cause permanent hearing damage in fewer than 15 minutes. If you aren't willing to hire a professional landscaper to do the work, consider replacing older models of leaf blowers with newer models that offer reduced decibel output and always wear quality or custom earplugs during yard work.

Realize the risks of football season.

In stadiums across America, football fans are gearing up for another fun season of competition. There's no better way to support your team than cheering wildly with fellow fans at a live event, but there's also no better way to permanently damage your hearing. Any sound over 85 dB should be considered potentially dangerous, and noise over 120 dB is known to cause instant hearing loss. Whether you're attending a high school, college or professional game, earplugs are essential to your hearing safety.

Talk to your audiologist about hearing protection.

Your audiologist can help you find a solution for protecting your hearing that fits your lifestyle. Options for protecting your hearing without compromising your performance are available for a wide range of activities. From specialty musician's plugs that let you hear the notes risk-free to hunter's plugs that enhance ambient noise while protecting your hearing from gunshots and explosions, a solution exists for all activities and lifestyles.

CHEMOTHERAPY & HEARING LOSS



If you are a cancer patient receiving chemotherapy treatment, it's crucial that you have your hearing tested. Certain chemotherapy drugs are ototoxic, meaning they are associated with hearing loss. Cisplatin chemotherapy, for instance, has been linked to hearing loss in many studies. Other diuretics and antibiotics taken by cancer patients can also lead to ototoxicity. Early detection will give you better options for treatment.

How Does Chemotherapy Contribute to Hearing Loss?

Chemotherapy drugs are designed to combat cancerous cells in the body. Unfortunately, they cause side effects that can damage healthy cells and organs, as well. Certain groups of chemotherapy drugs damage the hair cells in the cochlea of the inner ear that are responsible for hearing. Typically, they affect the high frequencies, making detection more challenging. There are signs you should watch for that might indicate the onset of hearing loss.

Symptoms include:

- Sounds are muffled or less obvious
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Sudden pain in the ear
- Vision loss
- Nausea, vomiting and/or dizziness

Any of these symptoms warrant an immediate call to your doctor.

Treating Hearing Loss

A hearing test will detect hearing loss in many cases before the patient is even aware of a problem. If caught early, your doctor may be able to prescribe a different medication or discontinue a harmful one. Many patients benefit from hearing devices; these work by amplifying sounds to make them clearer.

If you are taking chemotherapy drugs that put you at risk for hearing loss, schedule an evaluation today.



THE EFFECTS OF HEARING LOSS ON THE SPOUSE



If you are suffering from hearing loss, you're not alone. While an estimated 36 million American adults experience some degree of hearing loss, those closest to you – your immediate family – are affected even if they don't share your hearing impairment. Your spouse, in particular, may have a difficult time dealing with your hearing loss.

Many spouses complain of a lack of communication. They resent having to repeat themselves, and adopt strategies such as positioning themselves in front of their husband or wife when speaking, encouraging lip reading and relying on handwritten notes.

The big effect is on everyday activities, mainly television and telephone use. Spouses must deal with increased volume when the TV is on, making it uncomfortable for them to watch television in the same room. They also tend to be the ones to answer and make all telephone calls. There is also a reduction in social activities, with the hearing impaired partner more likely to want to stay at home rather than venture out and put him or her in a potentially uncomfortable situation.

Naturally, these factors lead to resentment and put a strain on the marriage. Increased tension often leads to a lack of intimacy, causing serious damage to the relationship.

If you are hearing impaired and married, there are steps you can take to improve your relationship with your spouse and ease his or her burden. If you own hearing devices, use them – and if you don't, speak with your audiologist to see if they will help. There is a direct correlation between hearing device use and relationship satisfaction.

Of equal importance: accept your condition rather than wallowing in self-pity or despair. Nobody wants to have difficulty hearing, but dealing with it in a positive manner can go a long way toward maintaining a solid marriage. When you accept your impairment, your spouse is more willing to help and it's easier for both of you to adapt to the situation.

If you or your spouse is experiencing hearing loss, call us at (360) 580-0244 to learn more about your treatment options.

