

Should I See an Audiologist?

au·di·ol·o·gist—Audiologists are health care professionals who provide patient-centered care in the prevention, identification, diagnosis, and evidence-based treatment of hearing, balance, tinnitus, and other hearing disorders for people of all ages.

Answer these questions to help you decide if you should make an appointment to have your hearing checked with an audiologist.

- Do you have a problem hearing on the phone?
- Do you hear better in one ear than the other when on the phone?
- Do you have a hard time understanding the conversation when more than one person is talking at the same time?
- Do your friends and family tell you that you turn the TV volume up too high?
- Do you have to listen carefully to understand conversation?
- Do you have trouble hearing when it is noisy?
- Do you have trouble hearing in restaurants?
- Do you have dizziness, pain, or ringing in your ears?
- Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?
- Do family members or coworkers say that you miss what they said?
- Do many people you talk to seem to mumble (or not speak clearly)?
- Do you respond inappropriately after misunderstanding what people say?
- Do you have trouble understanding women and children?
- Do people get upset because you don't understand what they say?

If you answered yes to more than one of these questions and you are concerned, see an audiologist to have your hearing checked.

It can seem overwhelming to go to an audiologist for the first time. You may have a lot of questions about your hearing. Your audiologist will ask you some questions about your health. Use this list to help guide you before, during, and after your visit.

Before Your Visit

- Write down questions, or record them on your phone.
- Bring a family member or friend with you. It is helpful to have someone there with you to help remember what the audiologist said.
- Some medicines affect hearing. Bring medicines that you are taking. If you cannot bring the bottle, write down the names of your medicines and how much you take each day.
- Write down your medical history. It is easy to forget, and your audiologist will ask!
- Check with your insurance plan to find out about your coverage and who pays. Some plans make you get a doctor's referral to see the audiologist. Be ready to take notes. You may want to bring paper and a pen, or use your phone.
- Call the office ahead of time if you need an interpreter during your visit.
- Be sure to go to your appointment, even if you think that you can't afford hearing aids or hearing services. Sometimes, you can get help from charities and organizations for both children and adults.

During Your Visit

- Use the “Ask Me 3” questions.
 - What is my main problem?
 - What do I need to do?
 - Why is it important for me to do this?
- Ask the questions you wrote down before your visit.
- Write down recommendations. Have your family member or friend take notes, also. You can also ask if you can record the visit.
- Ask the audiologist to write down words you don’t understand.
- Tell the audiologist what you think they said to make sure you understood.
- Get a phone number and e-mail address in case you have questions after you leave.

After Your Visit

- Go over your notes. Check your loved one’s notes to see if you both heard the same thing.
- Call or e-mail your audiologist if you have other questions.
- Read books or magazine articles about hearing loss. Search the Internet for information. Be careful what you read because some information on the Internet may not be true.
- Your audiologist may make recommendations to help your hearing. Listen to the suggestions, and be ready to ask questions.
- Read about the different types of hearing aids, and make a list of which one you would like. Hearing aids have many features to meet your needs and wants. Other hearing assistive technologies can help you, too.
- Check with your insurance plan to find out how much is covered. There are different types of payment for hearing aids and other hearing assistive devices. Medicare and Medicaid have their own requirements.
- At your follow-up appointment with the audiologist, go over options, and ask more questions if necessary.

NOTES:

For more information and to view the entire Audiology Information Series library, visit www.asha.org/aud/pei/.

For more information about hearing loss, hearing aids, or referral to an ASHA-certified audiologist, contact:



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