



Ask the Geriatrician

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Want to Ask a Question or Make a Comment?



Click on the "Ask" bubble above the video player to ask a question or make a comment.



OR

You may also phone or text your questions to
(210) 889-1285



To Access Resources:



Click on the "paperclip" button above the video player to open links to resources.

The screenshot shows a video player interface. The main video area displays a man in a suit, identified as David A. Smith MD, FAAFP, CMD, President of Geriatric Consultants of Central Texas, PA. The video title is "Doctor and Patient Communication - How to Talk to Your Doctor". The video is paused at 02:13:52. A sidebar titled "Presentation Links" is open, listing several topics: "Advocacy, Action, Answers on Aging", "What is a Matter of Balance?", "Healthy Aging Programs", and "A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults". The video player has a standard control bar at the bottom with play, pause, and volume buttons. The background of the video player is dark with orange and yellow accents.

What do you think?

SURVEY

Please Click Here to Take Our Survey!

- Your feedback is important to us.
- Click on 'SURVEY' in the upper right of the presentation screen.
- It takes less than 5 minutes.



To request mmLearn.org materials:



Contact us at:
info@mmlearn.org
210-734-1215

Do You Hear What I Hear?

A Discussion on Hearing Loss



Dr. Jane Watson
Audiologist



Introduction



- œ Helen Keller once said that she would rather have her hearing restored than her vision – surprised?
- œ I see people in my office all the time who have made the comment, “I’d rather be deaf than blind”. I think what most people don’t understand is that hearing is our connection with people – conversations with a loved one, hearing beautiful music at a symphony, enjoying the sounds of nature.

Overview



✧ In our time together today, I want to address several issues pertaining to hearing loss including signs of hearing loss, how it can strain a relationship, some of the common causes of hearing loss – and then offer some solutions to this problem



What are some of the simple early signs of hearing loss?



- ❧ Saying “What?” or “Huh?” more often
- ❧ Turning the volume up on the TV or radio
- ❧ Missing the punch line or major parts of a story being told



More Complex Early Warning Signs of Hearing Loss Can Include:



- ❧ Avoiding group situations – it's so much easier to stay home and not work so hard to hear – it's exhausting!
- ❧ Less small talk – not easy to do when you are constantly asking people to repeat
- ❧ More concentration on visual cues – we can get information from facial expressions and some speech reading
- ❧ More silence – or more talking – because it's easier than listening!

More Complex Early Warning Signs of Hearing Loss (cont.)



- ⌘ More withdrawal – tired of being out of the conversation loop
- ⌘ More misunderstandings and more arguments (You NEVER told me to do that!)
- ⌘ More guessing in a conversation and more frequent wrong guesses – it's fine if the hearing impaired person laughs at their mistakes but not everyone else!

What Causes Hearing Loss?



- ❧ Noise exposure
- ❧ Family history (look at my aid!)
- ❧ Medications that are used for serious illnesses – chemotherapy or myacin drugs
- ❧ Trauma
- ❧ History of ear infections/surgeries
- ❧ Tumors
- ❧ Congenital



Hearing Aids



So if someone has a hearing loss, what do we do? There are so many hearing aids on the market and people are inundated with literature daily about promises for perfect hearing for \$495! Hearing aids are expensive because most major manufacturers have spent millions of dollars on research to make their product better.



Hearing Aids



Let me be clear that hearing aids are just that – AIDS! Not even the most expensive hearing aid can restore hearing to normal. We actually hear with our brains, not our ears – but the aid can at least get the sounds of speech and the environmental sounds up to the processing part of our brains!



Hearing Aids



- ✧ Always ask around for a good office to get your hearing aid – don't let price be the only questions you ask. Find out what the price includes (checkups, batteries, warranty?). Ask your friends where they go for theirs! Hearing aids are expensive but they are also available for just about any budget – make sure that the office you go to makes you feel comfortable and you trust them.



What are some realistic expectations of hearing aids?



- ❧ In quiet environments, your hearing should improve
- ❧ Your hearing with background noise is usually not going to be as good as in quiet
- ❧ Soft speech should be audible, average speech should be comfortable, and loud speech should not be uncomfortable
- ❧ Your hearing aids/earmolds should never hurt!

What are some realistic expectations of hearing aids?(cont.)



- ❧ There should be no feedback/whistling if the hearing aids are properly seated in your ear
- ❧ Your hearing aids should allow you to listen with less effort

Hearing aids can't always solve all of your problems



- ❧ Today we have access to assistive listening devices such as:
 - ❧ Amplified or captioned telephones
 - ❧ Closed captioning on the TV if someone has reduced speech discrimination
 - ❧ Movie theatres will provide personal listeners at no charge if you ask – many live theatres have them as well!
 - ❧ Churches have installed special listening devices that you can plug into the sounds system to hear more clearly
 - ❧ Hearing aid manufacturers have additional ALDs to add to the hearing system – phone clips, mini mics, TV streamers, and remote controls give more flexibility

GO WIRELESS.



The easy-to-use ReSound Unite wireless hearing aid accessories work with ReSound Alera and ReSound Alera TS to help you hear things that are outside the range of any hearing aid. And they do it discreetly, without devices to wear around your neck. This is thanks to the 2.4 GHz wireless technology, a robust and reliable standard, which gives you strong, clean and stable communications.



ReSound Unite Phone Clip

Makes talking on a mobile phone automatic, effortless & reliable. It gives you a wireless connection between your Bluetooth-enabled mobile phone and your hearing aids.

ReSound Unite Mini Microphone

Transmits speech directly to your hearing aids. It is a discreet clip-on microphone that helps you hear speech clearly. So you can enjoy one-on-one communication in difficult listening situations. Effortlessly and reliably. The Mini Microphone also functions as a personal, portable audio streamer to help you listen to your iPod or laptop. Or for TV watching when you're away from home - just place it in front of the speakers of the TV to stream directly to your ears. It's the ultimate portable voice and sound streamer.

The ReSound Unite Remote Control

Makes sure you never lose track of your hearing aid settings. You can for example use the Remote Control to change programs and adjust the volume on each of your hearing aids individually.

The ReSound Unite TV Streamer

Sends clear stereo sound from your TV, computer, stereo and other audio devices directly and wirelessly to your hearing aids. No cables or wires are needed.



ReSound Unite® Phone Clip



ReSound Unite® Mini Microphone



ReSound Unite® Remote Control



ReSound Unite® TV

Processing Sounds as we Age



As we age, we often don't process sounds and speech the way we did when we were younger – background noise can wreak havoc with just a casual conversation, especially in a noisy dining room at a retirement residence. Hard floors and lots of windows with no drapes can be a nightmare for the hearing impaired listener. Sound can bounce around the hard surfaces and cause an echo effect, drowning out speech around the dining table.

How do you know if a hearing aid will help?



- ❧ 30 day trial period is mandatory in many states
- ❧ Many offices can do an in office demonstration of technology
- ❧ People need to wear them in their “real life” situations to assess what program changes might help
- ❧ YOU NEVER KNOW UNTIL YOU TRY!!!

Why the stigma attached to hearing loss?



I ask my patients all the time why they don't want to wear hearing aids. Most responses are "I don't want to bother with one more thing that reminds me that I'm old!" Hearing loss can occur at any age – and for various reasons besides age. It just gets more complicated when other health issues are part of a person's life. Eyeglasses are never questioned if someone can't see, but the same doesn't hold true of hearing loss and hearing aids. I hope that changes while I'm still practicing!

Just Remember...



...when working with hearing impaired people, be patient, be prepared to repeat (maybe just a little more slowly), and know that a little extra effort goes a long way in overcoming communication frustrations!



Q&A Session



Thank You

