



What Can Be Done

hearing loss

*We realize you may have questions regarding the condition and treatment options.
We have designed this brochure to provide you with answers to your most common questions.*

signs of hearing loss

ask yourself

- Do you need to ask others to repeat what has been said?
- Do others complain that you aren't listening?
- Do you prefer the TV/radio volume higher than is comfortable for others?
- Do you have difficulty following conversations with background noise?
- Do your ears ever ring, buzz or hiss?
- Do voices sound mumbled?
- Do you find men's voices easier to understand than women's voices?
- Are you able to hear people speaking but find it difficult to understand what has been said?
- Has a friend or family member mentioned concern regarding your hearing?
- Have you experienced a sudden decrease in your hearing?
- Have you ever been exposed to loud noise in your lifetime? (firearms, noisy work environments, etc.)
- Is there a difference in hearing sensitivity between your ears?

If you answer "yes" to any of these questions, please contact the Audiology Department to schedule a comprehensive hearing evaluation. Some insurances may require a referral from your primary care physician before scheduling your test.



we care for you

hearing loss

Hearing loss is the third most common medical complaint in older adults surpassed only by arthritis and hypertension. However, hearing impairment does not only affect the elderly. One in twelve 30 year old adults already have some level of hearing impairment.

Hearing loss is often not detected immediately as its impact can be subtle initially and coping mechanisms are gradually learned to better deal with the loss. Often patients are unaware of their hearing loss until a significant loss is present and others have noticed their difficulty.

Although most hearing loss is natural and worsens with aging, there may be medical causes of hearing loss as well. Common causes of temporary and often treatable hearing loss include ear infections and wax build-up in the ear canal.

Hearing loss which occurs suddenly warrants *immediate* attention and evaluation. Please contact your primary care physician, an otolaryngologist or audiologist as soon as possible.

audiology

The audiologists at DuPage Medical Group have master's degrees in audiology and are state licensed as well as certified through the American Speech Language and Hearing Association. Audiologists customarily work closely with DuPage Medical Group's otolaryngologists, however, they are fully qualified independent healthcare professionals. Direct referral to the Otolaryngology Department may be recommended based upon the audiological assessment, as well as a patient's particular symptoms, such as sudden hearing loss, dizziness, ear drainage or ear pain.

assessment

A hearing evaluation is a series of diagnostic tests to assess your hearing sensitivity. Assessment will detect if a hearing loss is present and if so, determine the degree, type and configuration of that loss.

Hearing can be assessed in any patient of any age. In fact, by state mandate, the hearing sensitivity of newborn infants is screened prior to dismissal from the hospital. Testing takes approximately 20 minutes for older children and adults and up to 60 minutes for infants. No special preparation is required, though woman may need to remove large earrings for a more comfortable fit of the earphones. Results and recommendations will be discussed with you immediately following the exam.

Family members who are concerned regarding your hearing are encouraged to accompany you to the appointment, not only so that they may further understand your hearing difficulties, but also to learn methods of easing communication frustrations for both of you.

otolaryngology

In the evaluation of hearing loss, an otolaryngologist, (more commonly known as an ear, nose and throat specialist), may be needed to examine your ears and analyze your hearing test. Many medical conditions can affect hearing and may require either medical or surgical treatment to address the hearing loss. Furthermore, an otolaryngologist will help to ensure that there is no other cause of hearing loss that should be treated prior to the fitting of hearing aids.

