

# If you are over 45 perhaps a hearing check-up is in order

For many boomers, fall is the time of year we tackle those chores we put-off over the summer months. For some this means cleaning the garage or seeing the doctor for a check-up... but what about a hearing check-up?

Been a while, huh?

Hearing loss is a natural, mostly age-related phenomenon... a permanent and irreversible condition that is much more pervasive and common than generally believed; it is the third most common chronic health problem in Canada. This condition affects more than 10% of all Canadians overall, including 25% of Zoomers over the age of 45, and 50% of those over the age of 65.

Those who suffer with untreated hearing loss typically experience embarrassment, anxiety, stress, work related problems, and self-imposed isolation from normal social relationships... mostly avoiding family and friends.

How can you tell if someone has a hearing loss? There are many indicators, including tinnitus (commonly described



as a ringing sensation in the ears when no external sound is present); having the TV or radio volume too loud or a lot louder than others in the room want; frequently asking others to repeat themselves, or complaining that they're mumbling.

ListenUP! Canada's Chief Audiologist, Kate Dekok explains, "People with hearing loss often find that they can hear when someone is talking, but they may not understand what is being said. In other

words, the volume is okay, but they're lacking clarity."

Hearing loss tends to significantly diminish the quality of one's life. "Untreated hearing loss can result in frustration, isolation and even depression," says Dekok. "It can also create some very stressful situations. For example, can you hear and understand what your doctor is advising you? In a meeting, theatre or religious gathering— can you hear the speaker clearly? And what about trying to have a

conversation in a noisy restaurant? Almost impossible!"

Sound familiar?

The good news is that most hearing loss is treatable, and that hearing aids have improved significantly over the last few years looking and sounding a whole lot better than even just a few years ago. The National Council on Aging determined that when someone is fitted with hearing aids, not only do they reduce stress and anxiety, but they also improve self-esteem and overall quality of life.

Dekok claims, "Most people with a treatable hearing loss will benefit greatly from wearing two hearing aids... yes two ears are much better than one! This allows for balanced hearing and comfortable communication in a variety of everyday situations. You will achieve better hearing in noisy environments, such as a restaurant; improved localization to determine where a sound is coming from, such as an emergency vehicle; and appreciate a fuller, more comfortable sound... from the crickets in your backyard to

the symphony orchestra at the theatre."

"Our hearing naturally connects us with the world around us, and restoring that connection can positively affect every aspect of life," assures Dekok, who recommends adults over age 45 get their hearing checked annually... and the best news about that is that this is a free service at ListenUP! Canada.

—Kate Dekok is Chief Audiologist of ListenUP! Canada, Ontario's leading provider of hearing aids, with over 70 locations and 100 experienced hearing professionals across the province. Their mission is to provide individuals who have a hearing loss with the most professional, comprehensive, convenient and affordable hearing healthcare products and services needed to enhance the quality of their lives through better hearing. For more information, please call toll-free 310-2244 or visit [www.ListenUPcanada.com](http://www.ListenUPcanada.com).

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