

Hearing Aids

What are hearing aids?

Hearing aids are electronic devices that make sounds louder for people who cannot hear well. Hearing aids have a microphone to pick up sound, an amplifier to increase the sound, a device to transmit the sound to the ear, and a battery. These different parts of a hearing aid are usually packaged together in small devices that fit into the ear.

What are the different types of hearing aids?

There are many different types and styles of hearing aids.

- The microphone, amplifier, and battery of a **behind-the-ear hearing aid** are in a case worn behind the ear. They are connected to a plastic ear mold that fits inside the outer ear. Sound travels through a short tube to the ear mold and into the ear.
- An **in-the-ear hearing aid** is an earpiece that contains all of the parts of the hearing aid and fits inside the outer ear.
- An **in-the-canal hearing aid** is like an in-the-ear hearing aid but is smaller and sits more deeply in the ear.
- **Eyeglass hearing aids** have the hearing aid in the eyeglass frames.
- A **body aid** has an earpiece connected by a wire to a small case containing a microphone and amplifier. The case is attached to a belt or pocket of your clothing. Body aids are the largest and most powerful type of hearing aid. They are usually used only when other types of hearing aids don't work for you.
- An **implantable hearing aid** is placed beneath the skin and behind the eardrum. It has no external parts.

Be sure to look at different hearing aids before you make your choice. Try to select a type that meets your specific needs. Make sure you are able to handle the hearing aid you choose.

Hearing aid companies must refund your money if you return the hearing aid within 30 days. Take advantage of this time to be sure that the hearing aid you choose is right for you.

Once you have found a hearing aid that meets your needs, you will soon get used to wearing it and learn to adjust the controls to pick up sound in different situations. Today's hearing aids are able to screen out a lot of background noise. They are small, easy to wear, and can make a big difference in your life.

How can I get the most from my hearing aid?

In addition to a hearing aid, there are several things you can do to make communication easier.

- Don't be shy. Tell people you have a hearing problem and politely ask them to face you and speak clearly. Watch lips and watch body signs. If you don't catch what was said, ask the person to repeat it, or ask, "Did you say....?"
- In groups or in an audience, try to position yourself where you can see the speaker. Don't be afraid to ask a speaker to speak up or use a microphone.
- If you are in a crowd and you can't hear the person you are speaking with because of background noise, suggest that you both move to the edge of the crowd, where there is less competing noise.

Also make sure you understand the details of your warranty, maintenance plan, and repairs process for your hearing aid.

What if my hearing aid stops working?

If your hearing aid seems to stop working, you can check a few things. For example:

- Check the battery. It might be drained.
- Check with your healthcare provider to see if you have wax or debris blocking the small speaker in your ear.

If you are not sure what's wrong, you will probably need to take it to a store to be checked.

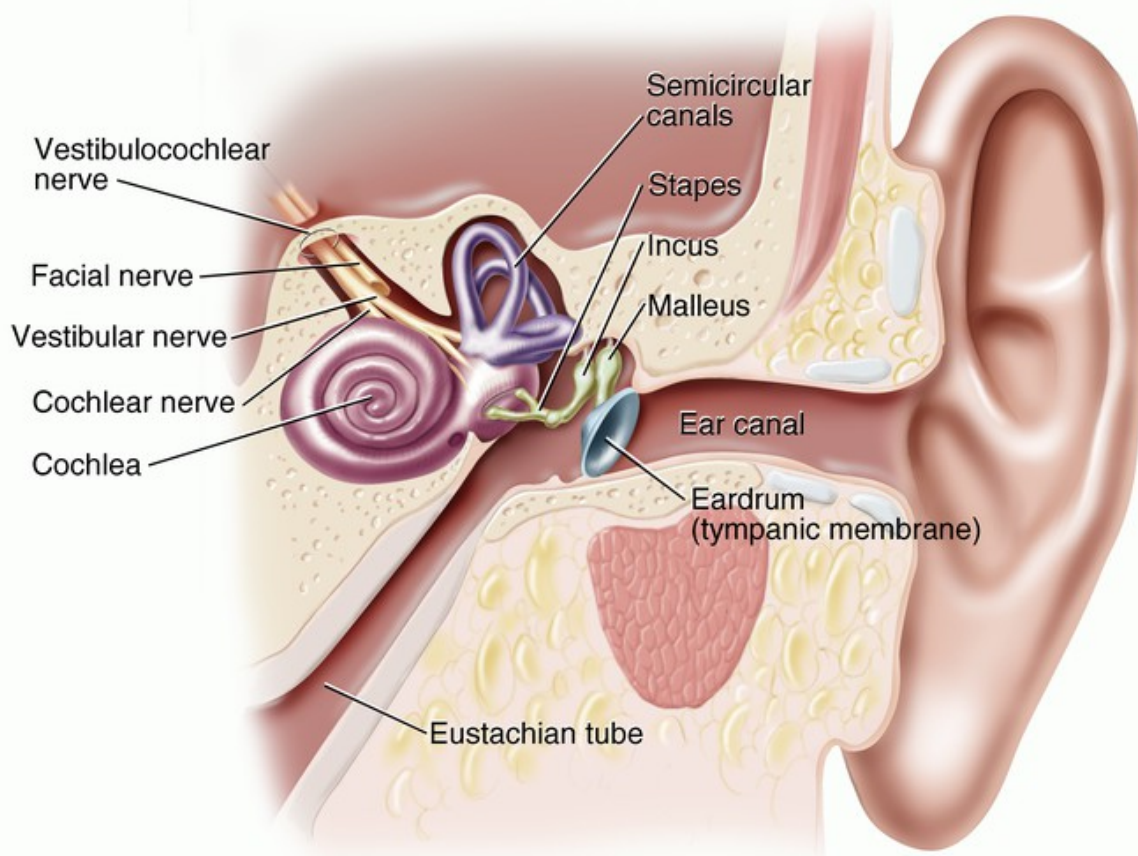
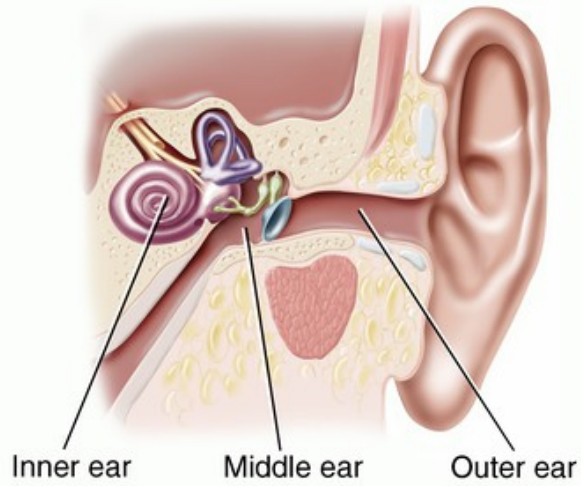
What other hearing assistance devices might I use?

Amplified telephone receivers for phone calls and amplified headsets for listening to music or watching television can be very helpful. You can also install a flashing light system in your home that lets you know when a telephone or doorbell is ringing. Many churches and auditoriums have special headphones installed for people with hearing problems. Take advantage of them.

Developed by RelayHealth.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.

Ear



Copyright ©2014 McKesson Corporation and/or one of its subsidiaries. All rights reserved.