

Sound News

May 2015

Volume 9 number 5

Facing the Challenge
of Hearing Loss
A SURVIVOR'S MANUAL



Published by
Hearing Loss Association of America
Oregon Lane Association

SURVIVOR'S MANUAL DISTRIBUTION - Are you helping?

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**CARRY A BOOK OR TWO WITH YOU IN YOUR CAR. TALK TO
PEOPLE. WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE !**

Where in the World are my Closed Captions *Hearing Health*

Have you noticed the recent buzz about closed-captioning? The FCC has introduced quality rules for closed captions (CC) on television: TV broadcasters and other video programming distributors now must ensure that captions meet the following quality standards:

Accuracy: Captions must be grammatically correct and provide essential non-verbal information.

Synchronicity: Captions must coincide as closely as possible with the audio.

Completeness: The entire program should be captioned.

Placement: Captions should be viewable, legible and not block important on-screen information.

While a great step forward for TV, the Internet still lags behind. In a recent Time article, Steve Friess a hearing impaired journalist wrote a complaint against the Internet's inaccessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing. As Steve watched the live-stream unveiling of the new Apple Watch, he realized there were no captions and was frustrated because Apple is often admired for creating devices that break down barriers for people with disabilities. By not providing CC, millions of people with hearing loss could not watch the event in real-time.

Individuals With Untreated Hearing Loss Earn Less

In a Better Hearing Institute survey a few years ago, they discovered people with hearing loss lose as much as \$30,000 annually in salary and wages. The good news is, those with mild hearing loss who used hearing aids cut the risk of that loss by 90 -100%, hearing aid users with severe to moderate hearing loss reduced their risk by 65 -77 %.

A greater earning potential may mean better benefits, which can offset other healthcare costs. And, if you're a student or still in the workforce, vocational rehabilitation programs may help pay for the cost of your hearing aids.

500 Genes Affect Our Hearing Loss

The explanation for inherent hearing loss can in most cases be found in our genes. More than 500 of the 30,000 human genes can impact hearing.

The human body consists of 30,000 genes that control the functions of the cells by creating different proteins. Of the 30,000 human genes, at least 5,000 affect hearing.

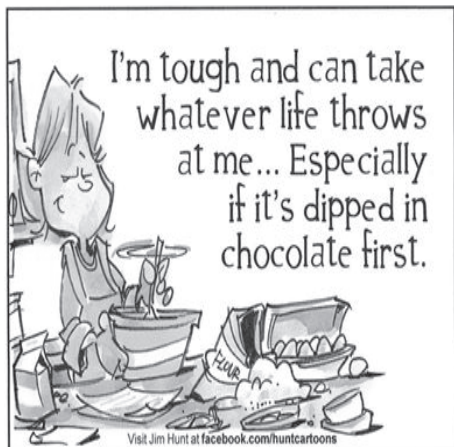
If a gene has a defect, it might not produce the protein it needs or produce too little of it. In this case, the gene is called a mutation. Of all the people born with a hearing loss, at least two out of three of these cases are caused by a mutation in one of the 500 genes.

Of the hearing losses caused by a mutation, one third of the instances contain a so-called syndrome which means that the hearing loss exists in combination with other symptoms. An example is Usher Syndrome that affects both hearing and vision.

The most common gene resulting in inherent hearing loss is called Connexin 26. This gene accounts for around 20% of all cases of inherent hearing losses.

In order to find the right treatment for hearing loss, it is important to find out which gene is causing it. In the case of Usher Syndrome, researchers are now in the process of experimenting with gene therapy, Möller says.

**Source: Din Hørsel (Norway) no. 7, 2014.
Hear It-s org.**



We all love chocolate! It's a great incentive!

An even better incentive is that with your knowledge of hearing loss you can help a lot of people who are struggling with their loss or their family's loss.

Make sure they get a Survivor's Manual!

Leone

HLAA Supports HR 1653, the Medicare Hearing Aid Coverage Act of 2015

In March,, Representative Debbie Dingell of Michigan introduced the Medicare Hearing Aid Coverage Act of 2015. Representative Dingell spoke of the need for change.

"I have learned in recent months how many seniors are burdened by this problem," said Dingell. "When I learned of this, the ENT doctor who brought it to my attention told me more than half the patients she saw who needed a hearing aid were unable to afford or obtain one. No one should feel isolated, confused or shut out from the world around them because they cannot afford the treatment they need. This bill is just one piece of the puzzle to bring our fragmented and unnavigable health care system into the 21st Century to better serve seniors and families."

Representative Dingell's bill would improve access to hearing aids and related examinations by removing part of the Social Security Act that prevents Medicare from covering hearing aids. The bill also directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study on insurance programs that provide services to help with hearing loss.

HLAA is thrilled that Representative Dingell has introduced this bill. We will be working to ensure that all members of Congress understand the importance of hearing health care for seniors.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Could you donate 2 hours a month of your time to your LOCAL HLA Chapter ? **We need :** Board Members- Secretary -Publicity Person-Webpage help in Word Press.

Please contact: Shirley Perry @ sugarplum17@comcast.net

Members: if you have changed your e-mail address please notify Karin Smith of the change karinsm@efn.org

Hearing Loss Assoc.-Lane County, Oregon Information calls are taken by Linda Diaz 790-1290

HLA A is published monthly for members of Hearing Loss Association of Lane County.

Annual chapter fee of \$10.00 can be mailed to HLA-LCO Inc. PO Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402

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Oregon website: www.hearinglossOR.org

Chapter website: www.hearinglosslane.org



If you're out helping folks with their hearing and spreading the word of what HLA does, tell Leone!

Untreated Hearing Loss Makes Your Brain Shrink

hearing healthcare

Hearing care is easy to overlook, but should be considered as important as your physical wellbeing! ,

Your brain and your ears work together. Our ears collect noise, funnel it to the inner ear where it's translated into electrical impulses and then send it along the auditory nerve to the brain where it's interpreted as recognizable sound. When a person with normal hearing begins to develop hearing loss and that pathway begins to deteriorate, the brain gradually forgets how to hear sounds and certain areas begin to shrink.

According to a 2014 study by researchers from Johns Hopkins and the National Institute on Aging, older adults with hearing loss realized accelerated rates of brain atrophy compared to those with normal hearing. The areas of the brain with the most atrophy included those responsible for speech and sound. These areas also play a role in memory and sensory integration, which may explain why individuals with untreated hearing loss also experience higher risk for developing dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Frank Lin, M.D., Ph.D. suggested individuals who have been diagnosed with hearing loss be treated "sooner rather than later. If hearing loss is potentially contributing to these difference we're seeing on MRI, you want to treat it before these brain structural changes take place," he said .

Hearing loss may also signal the onset of other serious health problems such as:

Heart disease. Many researchers believe that low-frequency hearing loss may signal the onset of heart

disease. Medical professionals think hearing health and heart health are related. When blood vessels are damaged by heart disease, it affects blood flow to the inner ear.

Diabetes. According to the American Diabetes Association, individuals with diabetes are twice as likely to experience hearing loss as those who do not have the disease. Researchers suspect the high glucose levels associated with diabetes cause damage to the blood vessels in the inner ear.

Kidney disease. An Australian research team discovered older adults with moderate chronic kidney disease (CKD) have a higher prevalence of hearing loss than those without CKD. Of the 2900 participants in the study age 50 and older, more than 54% of the participants with CKD reported some level of hearing loss, compared to 28 % of participants without the disease. Researchers believe this is because of structural similarities between tissue of the inner ear and that of the kidney.

Hearing loss is socially isolating. Unlike the deaf culture, which has a robust, vibrant language and social acceptance, those who gradually lose their hearing can find themselves at risk for depression, anxiety and social isolation.

There is a significant relationship between depression and hearing loss among older adults. As hearing decreases, the percentage of depressed adults increases. Five % of study participants with no hearing loss had bouts of depression compared to 11% of those who did have hearing loss.

Keeping Your Batteries Charged



Information You Can Use

WHO organization estimates that nearly 50% of all people aged 12 to 35 who live in middle- and high-income countries are exposed to unsafe levels of noise from the use of personal audio devices. Another 40% are exposed to potentially damaging levels of noise at concert venues, night clubs etc.

An October 2010 study showed a link between chronic kidney disease (CKD) and hearing loss. "The link can be explained by structural and functional similarities between tissues in the inner ear and in the kidney. Also, toxins that accumulate in kidney failure can damage nerves, including those in the inner ear."

It has also been found that some treatments for kidney ailments are ototoxic, meaning they cause hearing loss. In the U.S., there are 31 million adults living with kidney disease, 7.5 million of whom have moderate forms of CKD.

It has been found that those with hearing impairments lost cognitive abilities up to 40% more quickly and developed cognitive issues on average three years earlier than those with typical hearing.

New Survivor's Manuals –FREE to Anyone. Donations appreciated.
Cost to mail copies is \$4 each or 20 for \$35
PO Box 22501 Eugene, OR 97402

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P.O. Box 22501
Eugene OR 97402

I Hear Just Fine

Some people with hearing loss either don't realize they have it or are in denial. For some, it is a mix of both. Though it may seem strange that someone would not realize that he or she has hearing loss, it could happen. Hearing loss starts out with sounds being distorted – not getting softer. This means that consonant sounds that sound similar are more difficult to hear than others. This is problematic because in the English language, consonant sounds carry the meaning. The distortion of hearing loss can turn "sit" into "fit" in no time, obscuring meaning and leaving confusion.

Other times, when people say "I hear just fine," "I hear most things" or "I hear what I want to," they are in a state of denial. Having hearing loss often causes grieving and denial is just one step in the grieving process. They aren't yet ready to "admit" to themselves that they need treatment for their hearing loss. This may also involve projecting the problem, such as by accusing others of talking too softly or mumbling. Sometimes, people think that their hearing loss "isn't that bad" or isn't severe enough to warrant treatment. Sometimes people don't realize what they're missing out on, like their grandchildren's squeals or birds chirping. However, it's always best to seek hearing loss treatment sooner rather than later.

Healthy Hearing

People with a history of military service have an increased risk of hearing loss. In the United States, 1.5 million military veterans suffer from hearing impairment caused by their time in the services.

Need Help Paying Your Monthly Phone Bill? OTAP

Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) may provide a reduction in the monthly telephone bill for Oregonians who receive qualifying benefits.

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Download or Complete Applications at www.rspf.org



Membership in HLAA is \$20 student, \$35 individuals, \$45 for couple/family, \$60 professional. It includes the award-winning bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Loss*. Write HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 (Voice); 301-657-224 (TTY); 301-913-9413 (Fax) or www.hearingloss.org. Get the latest e-news: <http://www.hearingloss.org/membership/Sen.asp>.

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**Can't Hear With
Background
Noise?**

Or do you have difficulty understanding words on TV or having a telephone conversation? 30 million Americans have this type of hearing problem. Hearing aids help very little when there is noise present and make it worse in loud noise. They work best in low noise, "living room" situations. Background noise (especially speech) and long distances to the sound source, make you unable to distinguish words.

I know because I struggled with this problem for over 10 years as my hearing got worse until I discovered the existence of Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs). These devices bring the sound source closer while at the same time increasing the high frequencies that make words crisp. This improves your understanding dramatically in noisy backgrounds. Personal amplifiers, like the **Audable Personal Listener (\$79.99 - w/ headphones & earphones)**, are used in restaurants, automobiles, and small groups to enable you to UNDERSTAND what is being said. **45-day price refund.**

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With her faith and belief that her father will guide her, she sets out with her trusty dog. With the help of a friendly tugboat, she follows her dream to find the ocean and to finally set her heart at peace.

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Hearing Loss Assoc. of Lane County Chapter Fee and National Membership Form

Please fill out this form /survey and turn in at the general meeting or mail to HLA - Lane Co., PO Box 22501, Eugene, OR 97402.

I have enclosed: Chapter fees _____ \$10.00 Chapter Donation of \$ _____
National dues _____ \$35.00 (regular) \$70 _____ (professional)*

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Preferred phone: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Occupation (former occupation if retired) : _____

Why are you joining us?

What most interests/puzzles you about hearing or hearing devices?

Are you interested in volunteering? What would you like to do?

How did you learn about us _____?

Would you like to be on our email news list: _____ Yes _____ No

*Donations to either the national organization or our local chapter are always welcome and are tax deductible. (We do not share our information lists with anyone else. Receipts will gladly be provided.)

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This copy is
free-
please feel free
to take it.

If the month & year on your mailing label have already passed, it's time to renew your membership! Please use the form on page 6 to pay your dues

**May 14 7:00 PM The Hilyard Center
FEELING THE SOUL OF MUSIC**

David Helfand is a composer, performer and multi-instrumentalist who plays Celtic Harp, Mandocello, Guitar and has recorded and released (7) albums including this most recent CD of original harp and viola music. 2 pieces from David's CD "First Light" were played nationally on Stephen Hill's "Music From The Hearts of Space" radio show of contemplative space music. David has performed throughout Oregon and Washington and in 2003 performed at the renowned environmental center The Eden Project in Cornwall, England on his first tour of the UK.

David has designed and runs a special music program for adults with developmental disabilities for The City of Eugene called "Melody Makers" and runs a program called "Joy of Music" for the Oregon Supported Living Program (OSLP).

"Music is a Universal Language". It is and can be experienced in many different ways and can bring joy to everyone. Whether one hears the full majesty of an orchestra, feels the pulsating beat of rhythm through speakers or feeling an instrument while it's being played or playing it yourself, the magic of music speaks in many ways with many languages.

Audience members will have the opportunity to try various musical instruments showing how music can be assessable to all.

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Calendar

Board May 5
3:30 to 5 pm Members Welcome
Hilyard Community Ctr.
2580 Hilyard St Eugene

Membership meetings are the 2nd Thursday of the month. They are accessible for all degrees of hearing loss by amplification—loop assistive listening systems.

Real time captioning by CC Reporting (Debby, Chris, ad Jan)