



# YOUR HEARING IS IMPORTANT!

## HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEARING DETERIORATION

You might take your hearing for granted, but once it's damaged, it's damaged for life. Any deterioration in hearing can have a profound impact on your quality of life, and the resulting difficulty in communication can lead to:

- Fewer educational and job opportunities
- Social withdrawal and reduced access to services
- Emotional problems caused by a lowered self-esteem

For this reason, it's crucial to protect your ears in any way you can, especially if you spend a lot of time around loud noises.



### Tips & tricks to guard against hearing loss

#### USE EARPLUGS IN NOISY ENVIRONMENTS

From heading to clubs and concerts, to using loud machinery such as lawnmowers and chainsaws, any noise that forces you to shout to be heard is dangerous for your ears<sup>1</sup>. A cheap and easy way to protect your hearing is to use earplugs whenever you're exposed to high sound levels. These can be obtained from most pharmacies for very little cost, and are usually reusable.



## TURN THE VOLUME DOWN

With many of us consuming media at least once a day, whether it's watching TV or listening to music in earphones, monitoring your volume levels is essential. If you're watching TV or other media, keep the volume at a level that means you're not straining to hear, while keeping it low enough that you can't hear it throughout your house<sup>2</sup>.

In headphones, you should stick to the 60/60 rule – listening for no more than 60 minutes a day with the volume set to maximum 60%<sup>1</sup>. You should also try and avoid earbuds, which sit right next to your eardrum, aiming for over-the-ear headphones instead<sup>1</sup>.

## ALLOW YOUR EARS TO RECOVER

If you spend time in a loud area, such as a music show or a noisy bar, try and step outside for a few minutes every now and again to give your ears a rest. Research has shown that for a single loud night out, your ears need more than 16 hours of quiet to recover, so make sure you're striking a good balance – especially if you're not using earplugs<sup>1</sup>.

## DON'T USE COTTON SWABS!

Cotton swabs, also known as cotton buds, are designed to clean your ears – but have more risks than benefits. You should never put anything in your ears, as this can damage sensitive organs such as your eardrum<sup>1</sup>. Plus, a bit of wax in your ears is actually healthy, as it stops dust and other harmful particles from entering your ear canal<sup>1</sup>.

## GET YOUR HEARING TESTED

Most adults have never had a hearing test, which makes monitoring any possible deterioration tricky. Even if you don't think your hearing is compromised, getting tested will give your audiologist a baseline to compare future results against<sup>2</sup>. Once you have established a baseline, get tested regularly to see if your hearing is deteriorating, as the slow progression of hearing loss can often go unnoticed<sup>1</sup>.



**Protect your hearing, get tested and minimise your risk of reduced quality of life today!**

## References

1 - <https://www.earq.com/hearing-health/articles/9-ways-to-protect-your-ears>

2 - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/hearing-loss/4-ways-to-protect-your-hearing>

