



# Can You Hear?

## Degrees of Hearing Loss

The degree or severity of hearing loss is defined by the threshold of hearing. Below is the most commonly used classification, which divides hearing levels into 5 bands of severity. We list some of the difficulties expected at each level, without amplification.

Degree of hearing loss	Hearing Thresholds	Sound examples in this range	Possible challenges and needs
<b>Normal Hearing</b>	Up to 20dB HL	Rustling leaves, clock ticking	None
<b>Mild Hearing Loss</b>	25 - 40dB HL	Quiet speech, clicking fingers	This is comparable to lightly plugging both ears. Difficulty hearing soft speech or from a distance. Noisy settings like classrooms and restaurants pose extra difficulty.
<b>Moderate Hearing Loss</b>	45 - 70dB HL	Normal conversational speech	This is comparable to wearing well-fitting earplugs in both ears. Approximately 50% of speech is inaudible. You may understand conversational speech at close proximity, in quiet, when facing the speaker. Listening in background noise is very difficult. Speech-language development is affected in all children.
<b>Severe Hearing Loss</b>	75 - 90dB HL	Telephone ringing, baby crying	Most environmental sounds are inaudible. Conversational speech cannot be understood without amplification. Heavy reliance on visual cues such as lip reading, even with hearing aids. Early intervention is required for speech-language development. Cochlear implants may be recommended.
<b>Profound Hearing Loss</b>	95dB HL	Truck, chainsaw	Natural hearing is not functional. Cochlear implants may be recommended.

### Services at Medical Audiology

- Adult and child hearing assessments
- Hearing aids
- Tinnitus assessment & management
- Assistive listening devices
- Noise and water protection
- Cochlear implants
- Bone conduction hearing implants
- Electro-acoustic hearing implants
- Balance assessments & rehabilitation
- Auditory brainstem response tests
- Pre- and post-employment assessments

### What's New at MAS?

In November 2015, Dr Vesna Maric was invited by the WA branch of Audiology Australia to present on tinnitus treatments as part of a seminar held by an internationally recognised tinnitus specialist Professor Billy Hal Martin. A special thanks goes to Medical Audiology Services clients who generously agreed to have their cases discussed at the meeting.

In May 2016, Vesna will hold a workshop on tinnitus treatment at the biennial Audiology Australia National Conference in Melbourne. While on maternity leave, Vesna has been lecturing at The University of WA and keeping in close contact with Medical Audiology Services.

## Noise Exposure

Noise induced hearing loss is an irreversible condition that affects many Australians. The sad thing is that it is a preventable hearing loss.

A noise injury is mostly acquired gradually as a result of exposure to noise over time. Long term exposure to loud noise in the workplace is the most common preventable cause of permanent hearing loss. There are now however also numerous noisy leisure activities which can damage your hearing.

Hearing slowly gets damaged in an almost imperceptible way and may take many years of exposure before the effect is noticed.

Here are a few simple ways to protect your ears.

### THREE EASY WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR EARS

- Walk away - moving away from the source of the sound will decrease the effect of noise dramatically.
- Turn it down - turn down the volume of your personal stereo system.
- Protect your ears - when in a noisy environment protect your ears with ear plugs, ear muffs or even your finger.

### QUICK NOISE CHECK:

- If you need to shout at a person only 1 metre away to be heard, then damaging noise is occurring in your environment.
- If you are listening to music through headphones and you can't hear traffic sounds or people talking nearby, your headphone volume levels are damaging your ears.

## Cochlear Implants & BAHA upgrade

Implant technology is constantly improving. Recent advances include better speech-in-noise hearing, automatic responsiveness to changing environments and connectivity to wireless devices.

Cochlear Ltd have recently released 3 new wireless accessories; mini-mic, phone clip and TV adapter all of which can also connect with ReSound hearing aids.

Cochlear implants have a 3 year warranty, while most bone conduction implants have a 2 year warranty, once the warranty on your device expires some private health funds will replace the processor with the latest technology.

If you are unsure how long you have had your device call MAS to book an appointment so that we can investigate it further.



Do you have an up to date referral with your ENT? Medical Audiology bills your ENT surgeon for any appointments needed for your CI or Bone anchored implant, this allows you to get the maximum rebate from Medicare. Before booking your appointment please make sure your referral is up to date - some GP's may even provide a long-standing referral.

Have we heard from you lately?

If you have not had a review in the last 18 months, it's time for a visit!

Regular hearing checks and device optimization are needed to keep you hearing the best you can.

Office of Hearing Services voucher holders are eligible to receive services free of charge.

If you are unsure of your status, please contact us on 9321 7746.

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