

HEARING BETTER

East Texas Hearing Solutions Newsletter

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“My Starkey” Training

Ever wish there was a way to practice understanding in noise? Well now there is. Starkey has developed an online Rehab Program that is designed to improve memory and understanding of speech. It consists of a series of games that teach your brain to filter out the noise and focus on the speech. It is very effective and FREE through East Texas Hearing Solutions. Find it at www.easttexasaudiology.com (Click on MYSTARKEY) or call us for more information.

“We now know that hearing loss affects more than our ability to understand people. It has been shown that heart disease, stroke, depression, dementia & Alzheimers have links to hearing loss. In the coming issues we will explore these links.”

Hearing Loss Tied to Other Issues

On September 28, 2015, NewsMax.com, an internet magazine ran the headline: “Hearing Loss in Seniors Tied to Earlier Death”. If you are over 65 that is a headline that will get your attention. The article went on to say a study on 1700 US adults 70 and over found that those with hearing loss were “21% to 31% more likely to die over the next several years.” If you fit this profile don’t rewrite your will and call the family together just yet. The study showed no causal effect and the reason for the link was not defined. Although this article is not definitive and rather extreme, evidence has been emerging over the last three years that suggests a strong link between hearing loss and dementia/Alzheimer’s. New studies indicate that hearing loss is not the cause of these feared diseases, but can play a role in speeding up their progression. A French study even went so far as to show that those wearing hearing aids grouped with the normal hearing population while those with untreated hearing loss progressed 2-5 times faster.

Should I Wait?

Should I wait until my hearing loss gets worse to get hearing aids? NO NO NO! While you are waiting to do something you are missing out on life and your ability to process noise and speech is being adversely affected. See the next article.



*Good Food * Good Fun * Good Conversation!
If you know someone who is missing out because of a hearing loss, encourage them to have their hearing tested.*



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Bad Things Can Happen While You Put Off Hearing Help

In the past we looked at hearing loss as an inconvenient annoyance for the person suffering the loss and their friends and family. Putting off doing something made life a little frustrating, but you could always get a hearing aid if it got too bad, or you became what you considered “old enough” to wear hearing aids.

The hearing aid industry has long observed that people with unaided hearing loss, over time tend to lose their ability to understand speech, particularly in background noise. The word discrimination list used in the hearing aid evaluation normally produces a score of 100% for people with normal hearing or mild hearing loss. For people who have lived with a moderate or worse loss for many years, this score is rarely 100%, and can be 60% or less. This means when words are loud enough and clear, the brain only recognizes 6 out of 10 words. We can help the person hear at a normal level, but understanding what is said can take considerable practice and effort. Until recently, this relationship has been antidotal without a clear understanding of why.

Recently researchers from the *University of Colorado* presented the results of a study at the *169th Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America* held May 18-22 in Pittsburg PA that suggests that a portion of the brain devoted to hearing can become reorganized, ie reassigned to other functions, even with early-stage hearing loss, and may play a role in cognitive decline.

“The hearing areas of the brain shrink in age-related hearing loss,” said Anu Sharma, PhD, one of the researchers. “Centers of the brain that are typically used for higher-level decision-making are then activated in just hearing sounds. These compensatory changes increase the overall load on the brains of aging adults. Compensatory brain reorganization secondary to hearing loss may also be a factor in explaining recent reports in the literature that show age-related hearing loss is significantly correlated with dementia.”

In simple terms, the brain is compensating for the hearing loss by robbing brain capacity from other functions. This is not good and may be causing consequences that can be permanently altering our memory, thinking, and reasoning processes. *(More about this next Month)*

<http://www.hearingreview.com/2015/05/researchers-discover-brain-reorganizes-hearing-loss>

Matthew 21:22 *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*

Visit us on the Web at www.easttexasaudiology.com
Here you can sign up for our newsletter, see what's going on at ETHS in both Longview and Lindale, and tap into information about new exciting technology!