

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: (Name)**

 **(Phone, Email)**

**Hearing Loss Is Common Across the Lifespan**

*(City) Audiologist Encourages Residents to Learn the Signs of Hearing Loss This
National Speech-Language-Hearing Month*

**City, State, May 1, 2024**—According to [new estimates](https://soundcheckmap.org/resources/data-highlights), 1 in 9 Americans has hearing loss in both ears. Although hearing loss can have serious consequences when left unaddressed, it is often not prioritized as a health or quality-of-life issue. This is a reality that (City-based) audiologist (Name) is aiming to change this May, which is recognized as *National Speech-Language-Hearing Month.*

“Most of us take our hearing for granted until we start to have significant difficulties,” said (Last Name). “Even then, we often don’t fully appreciate how critical our hearing is to all aspects of our lives. This May, I want to encourage everyone in the community to consider the state of their hearing—and to seek an evaluation from an audiologist if they have concerns. A variety of options are available if you discover that you have some degree of hearing loss, and audiologists can guide people through those options.”

**Hearing Loss in Children**

Two to three out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears—and almost 15% of school-aged children (6–19 years) have hearing loss in one or both ears.

When unaddressed in children, hearing loss can negatively impact their speech, language, and cognitive development—as well as their academic success, social interactions, and behavior.

Many children who pass their newborn hearing screening will go on to acquire or develop hearing loss later in childhood—causes include noise exposure, illnesses/infections, or other reasons. Moreover, most children do not receive hearing screenings yearly. This is why it’s important for families to know the signs of hearing loss in children:

* Does not alert to sound (birth – 3 months)
* Does not respond when you call their name (7–9 months)
* Does not follow simple directions (13–18 months)
* Shows delays in speech and language development (birth – 3 years)
* Pulls or scratches at their ears
* Has difficulty achieving academically
* Is socially isolated and unhappy in school

A variety of intervention and treatment options exist for children with any degree of hearing loss. Regardless of the approach, it’s important to start as early as possible so children can maximize their progress. Learn more from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association’s (ASHA) [website](https://www.asha.org/public/hearing/hearing-loss-in-children/).

**Hearing Loss in Adults**

When it comes to adults, hearing loss is exceedingly and increasingly common as people age. Among adults ages 35–64, roughly 9% have permanent hearing loss in both years. That number rises to 35% for people ages 65–74, and 73% for adults 75 and older. (Note that these figures do not include people with mild hearing loss or people with hearing loss in one ear.)

In adults, unaddressed hearing loss can lead to a poorer quality of life marked by challenges in areas such as physical and mental health, personal relationships, career growth and earning potential, and cognitive abilities as one ages (including a possible increased risk of dementia for some groups).

Despite the benefits of treatment, adults routinely delay acting on their hearing difficulties—and some never pursue it at all. Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30%) has ever used them. Even fewer adults aged 20–69 (approximately 16%) who could benefit from wearing hearing aids have ever used them.

“We know that treatment for hearing loss has the potential to transform a person’s life,” continued (Name). “Most people have no idea how much they were missing until they get hearing aids. Beyond feeling more connected to others and more engaged in their lives, they experience a plethora of other benefits. A major new study has even found that U.S. adults with hearing loss who wear hearing aids consistently have a significantly lower risk of dying earlier than those who never wear them.”

In adults, signs of hearing loss include the following:

* Hearing ringing, roaring, or beeping in one or both ears
* Not responding to spoken words
* Having persistent ear discomfort after exposure to loud noise
* Having muffled hearing
* Experiencing constant frustration trying to hear speech and other sounds
* Avoiding conversation
* Experiencing social isolation
* Experiencing depression

As a first step, adults with questions about their hearing can take a 2-minute [online hearing screening](https://www.asha.org/public/hearing/hearing-screener/) from ASHA. If you fail the screening, or if you have other concerns about your hearing, then you need more in-depth testing done by an audiologist to find out if you have a hearing loss and what treatment options may be right for you. (City) residents who want to schedule a hearing evaluation may contact (Name) at (phone, email, or website).

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