The Value of Audiology: Hearing Loss and Cognitive Decline/Dementia

Using Amplification to Treat Hearing Loss Reduces the Known Risk of Cognitive Decline/Dementia and Improves Quality of Life.

Hearing loss (HL) has been identified as a risk factor for dementia and/or cognitive impairment.

- Approximately **30%** of dementia cases among individuals with HL can be attributed to their HL. ¹
- Compared to those with typical hearing, individuals with HL are **1.9 times** more likely to develop dementia and **2.78 times** more likely to have co-occurring cognitive impairment. ²,³
- Individuals are **1.89 times** more likely to develop dementia with mild HL, **3 times** more likely with moderate HL, and **4.49 times** more likely with severe HL compared to those with typical hearing. ⁴
- Individuals with age-related HL are **2 times** more likely to have co-occurring cognitive impairment and **2.42 times** more likely to develop dementia. ⁵

Treating hearing loss with amplification reduces the likelihood of developing dementia and improves cognitive function.

- When using amplification, individuals with HL show no increased risk of dementia compared to individuals with typical hearing. ¹,⁶
- By treating hearing loss, the prevalence of dementia would be reduced by **8.2%**. ²
- Global cognitive function scores increased **4.8%** to **6.4%** among amplification users. ⁷,⁸
- Individuals using amplification also demonstrated improvements in short-term memory (12.5%-20.7%), attention (16.4%), and long-term/episodic memory (1.5 times) abilities. ⁷,⁹,¹⁰
- After cochlear implantation, **81%** of adults showed improvements in cognitive performance and **32%** of those with mild cognitive impairment returned to typical cognitive function. ⁹,¹⁰
- Among older adults at increased risk for cognitive decline, the use of hearing aids reduced cognitive decline by **48% over three years**. ¹¹

Additional benefits of amplification

- **Improved Quality of Life** ¹²,¹³,¹⁴
- **Improved Speech Understanding** ⁹,¹²,¹⁵
- **Decreased Depression, Anxiety & Stress** ⁵,¹⁶
References


Last Updated: 7/2023