



Fall 2005
 Sept, Oct, & Nov
Volume 2

Better hearing. Doesn't that sound good?

HEAR & NOW

Patriot Center for Hearing Loss Newsletter



Farmers, Save Your Ears! ...and we don't mean corn Hearing Protection for Hunters and Farmers

Harvesters, tractors, combines and camouflage announce the seasons and shape the landscape. But the sounds also do something else: They damage hearing. In fact, studies have shown that farmers and other agricultural workers may experience substantial hearing loss by the age of 30. This hearing loss is irreversible. But it's also 100 percent preventable. So just how loud are the noises on the farm?

Decibel Level of Common Sounds on the Farm

Lowest sound audible to human ears.....	0
Crickets, distant frogs, whisper.....	30
Kitten meowing, dog bark.....	40
Average conversation level.....	60
Chicken coop, busy restaurant.....	70
Tractor idling, conveyors, elevators.....	80
Tractor at 50% load, compressor, combine.....	90
Tractor at 80% load, pig squeal, power tools. ...	100
Tractor at full load, bad muffler, old chainsaw...	120
Gunshot, backfire, dynamite blast.....	140
Source: TAMU Biological & Agricultural Engineering Ag Safety & Health Program	

Translation? 70 decibels (dB) may begin to affect your hearing if exposed over the long term; 80 dB can damage hearing if exposed for more than 8 hours continuously; As loudness increases, the "safe" exposure time decreases- 90 dB can cause damage in less than 8 hours; at 100 dB, even 2 hours of exposure can be dangerous; at 120 dB, the danger is immediate; and at 140 dB, exposure is dangerous. At this level, noise may actually cause pain in the ear.

National Hunting and Fishing Day is September 24, which gives you hunters out there plenty of time to get educated about how noise effects you and to get prepared to do something about it this year. Hunters and target shooters actually have an even more immediate risk for hearing loss. A short duration of a very loud sound can cause as much damage as a less intense sound for a longer period of time. To put it simply, gunfire *will* damage your ears. Did you know that a .357 Magnum blasts 164 dB, which is



louder than if you were standing next to a 747 engine? Some people think a small .22 would not be so bad but it rings out at 153 dB, which is louder than a jackhammer at 130 dB.

There are several options available to protect your hearing. Remember, once the damage is done, it cannot be undone. So if you do not have hearing loss, start using hearing protection right away to help prevent future loss. If you already have hearing loss and can no longer hear just how loud things are, you may think protecting your hearing doesn't matter. But it does. If you have hearing loss, it is more important than ever to protect your remaining hearing. You can't afford to risk losing what you have left. If you wear hearing aids, turning them off or muting them will not act as hearing protection. Earplugs or earmuffs work well for those who need basic hearing protection, if used correctly. Custom fitted earmolds provide optimum hearing protection along with comfort and can be modified for specific situations. For example, shooters plugs allow you to hear conversations but will protect you from the blast of the gun. If you already have some hearing loss and need a device that will both help you to hear the soft sounds that you need to hear out in the woods as well as protect you from the loud blast of the gun, a custom fitted device called Sound Scopes by Starkey are recommended.

Please call our office if you have any questions, would like to order conventional plugs, or are interested in custom fitted protection. With such a wide range of choices, there is just no reason to not to use hearing protection. Talk to anyone who has serious hearing loss from noise exposure and they will tell you, beg you even, to do what you can to prevent hearing loss.



Announcements



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2005 COME CELEBRATE OUR ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY PATIENT APPRECIATION DAY!!

We opened our doors exactly one year ago on September 15, 2004. We greatly appreciate your support over the past year and we look forward to many more years to come. Stop by anytime between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to enjoy delicious refreshments, warm conversation and a free gift!

Please RSVP by September 12 so we can be sure to have plenty of food for everyone and to reserve your free gift.

We look forward to seeing you!



BATTERY CLUB

Need batteries? We've got 'em! Sign up today for our battery club. It's simple. And there are no cards or coupons for you to keep up with. Once you have signed up, we keep track of your hearing aid battery purchases. After you have purchased four packs of batteries, you get the next pack absolutely free!

By the way, keep up with your receipts for battery purchases and any other hearing aid accessories and you may be able to use them as a tax deduction under medical expenses. Talk to your accountant or tax preparer for more details.



EXTRA! EXTRA!



If you have been putting off getting hearing aids, now is the time to act. Siemens and Phonak, two of the country's leading hearing aid manufacturers, now include a Sonus Solutions package with their digital hearing aids at **no additional cost**. This includes a THREE-YEAR MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY for repairs, loss and damage as well as COMPLIMENTARY BATTERIES FOR THREE YEARS. This adds up to tremendous savings!

A Story of Sounds Forgotten

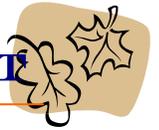
Usually, by the time you realize you are having trouble hearing you have actually been losing your hearing for quite some time. Sounds have gradually been slipping away until you begin to have trouble understanding people. Even then, most hearing impaired people do not immediately realize what is going on and put off seeking help a bit longer. Finally, something will trigger you to take that first step. Help for hearing loss often comes in the form of hearing aids. As many of you know, wearing hearing aids takes a bit of getting used to. You find yourself hearing things you hadn't heard in a long time. Far from being a bad thing, this is actually pretty wonderful. But until you have a chance to adjust, it can be a bit difficult. Understanding occurs in your brain rather than in your ears so once your ears are hearing again, it takes the brain a bit more time to adjust. When you first get hearing aids, your brain is in what I like to call "hyper-alert" mode, thinking all the new sounds, sounds that have been there all along but you were unable to hear for years, are important and need to be tuned in to. Once you get used to hearing them, these sounds will once again take their place in your subconscious and you will scarcely even be aware of them. ¹Some examples of these sounds include:

- The true pitch of your telephone ring
- Your clothes rustling as you walk
- The whoosh of the air conditioning or hum of the refrigerator motor



- The crackling and popping as you turn pages of the newspaper
- The rush of water flowing

Your ability to hear and then associate these sounds with their meaning will increase with time, patience and practice. It may not be easy but it can be fun to learn all these "new" sounds again. One new hearing aid wearer happily pronounced that he is no longer a member of the *Perpetual Turn-Signal Club*. You know the ones, with the turn signal on for miles and miles. I always recognize this as being someone with a high frequency hearing loss. Our newly fitted hearing aid patient now hears the signal and knows to turn it off once he has completed his turn or lane change. Recently, an amateur bird watcher reported experiencing an unexpected and pleasant surprise when he tried out his new hearing aids and realized the birds he was watching were actually singing too! He didn't even know what he was missing but how sweet that must have sounded. Another very kind lady who was fit with hearing aids told us that she could once again enjoy music and went back to playing the piano at her church, something she had given up when she was no longer able to adequately hear the notes she was playing. And one of the best comments I have ever received was when we first put hearing aids on a woman who had been suffering with hearing loss for several years. Through tear-filled eyes she looked at her husband and said, "I can hear you." Sounds forgotten... but not lost.



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PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WISH TO
HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR
NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST.

We invite everyone to take a peek at our brand new website at www.patriotcenterforhearingloss.com created by local designer, Ann Armstrong of Training Wheels of Tennessee right here in Jefferson City. They also offer computer training, online business directory, business cards, brochures, flyers, menus, church bulletins, etc. Ann was wonderful to work with and she did a great job! Be sure to check out her and husband Jack's website at www.trainingwheelsoftennessee.com as well.



We had to say a sad good-bye to our oldest kitty, Jade, this past month. She had been a member of our family for almost 15 years. I presented her as an early Christmas gift to my then boyfriend, Tony, at Thanksgiving when she was only about 8 weeks old. Tony and I were married a couple of years later and eventually Jade was joined by 3 feline sisters and a couple of canine siblings but she was always the matriarch. We referred to her as "The Big Kitty" and she pretty much ruled the roost. We will miss her terribly and bid her a peaceful and fond farewell. Good-bye Jade. We love you always.

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