

**Patriot Center for Hearing Loss Prayer List:** (complete names not given due to privacy regulations)

*A.L., great grandbaby with health concerns; also recently lost daughter.*

*Family of M.L.H, may they find peace in their hearts during this time of loss.*

*Mrs. K, going through cancer treatment.*

*Mr. L.L., both he and his wife struggling with serious health concerns; recent car accident.*

*Mr. and Mrs. P, have faced many challenges over the past year and continue to rely on God's grace to get them through.*

*B.A., recent emergency heart surgery.*

*K.S. had recent ear surgery and grandbaby hospitalized with pneumonia.*

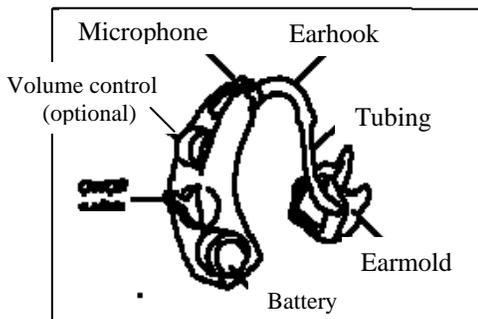
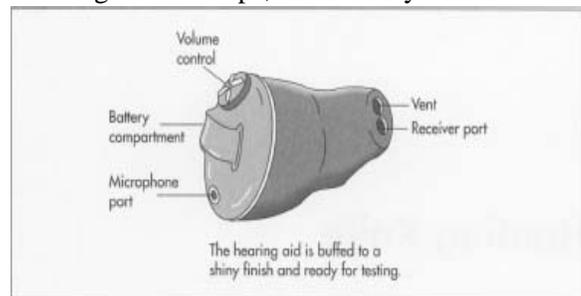
*...And many others who are on our hearts and in our prayers.*

## HEARING AID CARE

By following a simple and easy daily hearing-aid-care routine, you can help your hearing aids stay happy and healthy☺. And often, when you do run into a problem, it is a quick, simple fix you can take care of by following our basic troubleshooting guide. Occasionally, you may find your hearing aids need more care than you can do on your own. When this happens, please do not hesitate to bring them in for us to check. Most of our hearing aids have extended warranties that cover the costs of repairs and if you purchased your hearing aid here, we'll do what we can in the office at no charge even if they are no longer in warranty. And while most hearing aid wearers go for many years without ever having any problems, some may find their hearing aids to be repaired now and again, particularly if you spend a lot of time outdoors or in conditions where the hearing aids are exposed to a lot of dust, debris or moisture. After all, no matter how expensive or how new your hearing aids are, their electronic parts are very small, work very hard and are subject to the occasional breakdown just like any other electronic or computerized component.. Most of all, remember that you are the reason we are here! Never hesitate to let us know how we can help. It is a good idea to even make it a routine to have us check the hearing aids out every 3 to 6 months. Now here are those daily cleaning and care tips, followed by a troubleshooting guide:

### For Hearing Aids that fit In-The-Ear:

Clean your hearing aids daily. Wipe them with a dry cloth or clean with our recommended Audiowipes. Do not use alcohol. Use a small brush (let me know if you need one) and gently brush the area that goes into the ear as well as the faceplate (the front of the hearing aid).



### For Hearing Aids that fit Behind-The-Ear:

Clean your hearing aids daily. Wipe the hearing aid part with a dry cloth. Clean the earmold with a damp cloth or our recommended Audiowipes. Do not use alcohol. Have the tubing for your earmold changed every 3 to 6 months as needed (when the tube is no longer soft and pliable). You can remove the slim tubes for the mini behind-the-ear models and clean with the wire provided (let me know if you need more).

### For All Types of Hearing Aids:

- Avoid getting hearing aids wet; avoid exposure to extreme heat or cold; if you use hair styling products, do so *before* putting hearing aids in to prevent damage to microphones. Store hearing aids in dry area.
- Open battery doors when hearing aids are not in use. Do not store hearing aids for extended periods of time with the battery in. Do not store batteries in fridge/freezer.
- We recommend you use a hearing aid conditioning system called Dry & Store. This is a nightly maintenance system that absorbs moisture from the hearing aid as well as sanitizes and helps prevent itchy ears. Leave the battery in but with the battery door open so the battery is conditioned as well.



## No sound

- ✦ Make sure you have a fresh battery in; note: if you change the battery once and it still doesn't work, go to the next steps before trying another battery.
- ✦ Be sure the hearing aid is turned on or doesn't have a "delayed on" feature which can take up to 20 seconds for the hearing aid to come on; if closing the battery door is the way you turn your hearing aid on, be sure the door is closed all the way but don't force it closed.
- ✦ Check to see if hearing aid is blocked with wax; use your brush to clean receiver and microphone areas (see diagrams on previous page); do not probe or jab anything into the receiver or microphone ports. If your instrument uses wax guards, try changing them.
- ✦ Could be moisture. Try leaving the hearing aid in safe, dry area with battery door open for several hours to see if it comes back on. Use Dry & Store if you have one.
- ✦ If you have a Behind-the-Ear style hearing aid, try removing the tubing from where it connects to the hearing aid to see if moisture or wax is blocking the tube. Run a pipe cleaner through or rinse earmold and tubing out but DRY THOROUGHLY before re-attaching to the hearing aid. If you are uncomfortable doing this on your own, bring the hearing aid in. Use cleaning wire provided for mini behind-the-ear hearing aids with slim tubes.

## Instrument whist

Most hearing aids today come equipped with feedback managers to control annoying whistling or squealing. If your hearing aid whistles, here are some things to check:

- ✦ Make sure hearing aid is fitting properly in ear. Make sure hearing aid is in correct ear (right-red, left-blue). A change in your body weight could change the shape of your ear canal and your hearing aid or earmold may need to be remade. If the fit is only slightly off, use of Oto-ease lubricant can help. Earwax in the ear canal can also affect fit and may need to be removed.
- ✦ Check for earwax in hearing instrument and clean accordingly.
- ✦ Volume could be too high. Reduce volume. However, we want you to be able to use the hearing aid at a good volume for you so please schedule an appointment so we can check for other options and still maintain proper volume.

## Buzzing or "motorboat"

- ✦ Make sure battery compartment is completely closed. If meeting with resistance, make sure battery is in correctly. If still meeting with resistance, bring hearing aid in for us to check. Do not force closed.
- ✦ Could be weak battery. Try replacing the battery.

## Other

- ✦ If you have a Phonak behind-the-ear hearing aid, your hearing aid may use protective weather strips that need to be changed in our office periodically. When this is needed, you'll typically notice a muffled sound quality.
- ✦ Many hearing aids are equipped with low battery alerts. If your hearing aid is beeping, try changing the battery. If this doesn't help, check to see if earwax needs to be cleaned out of receiver area or wax guards need to be changed.
- ✦ As you can see, moisture and earwax are the two biggest enemies of hearing aids. The Dry & Store will help with both of these problems. Ask us for more details.

# EAR WAX: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

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## THE GOOD...

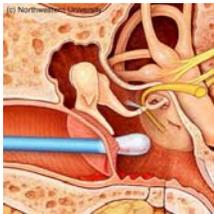
Earwax is often a misunderstood commodity. It actually serves a couple of important purposes: 1) it provides moisture for the ear canal, which helps prevent dry itchy ears, and 2) it protects the eardrum from damage due to dust, dirt and other foreign objects. Ears that do not produce enough earwax may have reddened, itchy, irritated canals. Of course, if your ears produce too much earwax, that can be quite irritating too!

## ...THE BAD

Too much of a good thing can lead to its own set of problems. Some people simply produce more earwax than others; however, it isn't always a matter of producing too much earwax but simply not managing the earwax properly. Normally, the wax migrates out of the ear, taking dead skin cells, dirt and dust along with it, so there is no need to actually clean the ears out. It happens naturally. There are a variety of reasons why this isn't always the case though. A small, narrow canal or production of a drier form of wax can cause wax to stubbornly rebel against its migratory nature. This is where it gets ugly.

## ...THE UGLY

Blockage of the ear canal can occur as more and more new earwax is produced and the old earwax has yet to extract itself. This can lead to infection and even temporary hearing loss. Using something to try to dig the wax out, such as q-tips, hairpins, paperclips, keys...and whatever sharp instrument you might choose to poke into your ear, is simply not a good idea. For one thing, you often end up pushing the wax deeper into the ear canal. The deeper it is, the more difficult it is to remove and the greater the risk. Digging around in your ear can also lead to abrasions of the thin ear canal lining which can lead to serious infections. You could even puncture your eardrum...ouch!...possibly causing permanent damage or even hearing loss.



**What to Do If You Have Impacted Earwax:** The only way to know for sure if you have wax build-up is visual observation. But if you are fairly certain that is the problem, you should be able to safely remove earwax if you take proper precautions. To soften earwax, use 3-5 drops of an over-the-counter product designed for this purpose or you can use mineral oil, baby oil or sweet oil (which is actually olive oil). You may need to do this for 3 or 4 days if the wax is really hardened. Sometimes, this is sufficient and the wax comes out on its own but more likely, you will need to use something to flush the wax out. Luke warm water in a bulb syringe is recommended but be sure it is just warm, not hot. When it is just the right temperature, you will not even be able to feel it as it will closely match your body temperature. If the wax is really packed in there, you will need to see a professional to have it removed. **DO NOT, I repeat, DO NOT use ear drops or water in the ear if you have or suspect you may have a hole in the eardrum** (or if you have ever been told not to get water in your ear). If in doubt, consult your healthcare provider first. It is also advisable to see your healthcare provider for professional wax management if you have health concerns that may suppress your immune system, such as Diabetes.

If you suffer from chronic wax build-up, ask your doctor if it is okay to use ear softening drops on a regular basis. This keeps the wax soft enough to migrate out more easily on its own. A couple of drops once a week should be sufficient. The best time to do this is at night, so the drops can sit for several hours. You may want to use a cotton ball to hold the drops in but be sure to remove the cotton after 15 to 20 minutes so the softened wax has a chance to come out.

An extra word of caution: We do not recommend Ear Candling for several reasons. All evidence indicates it to be completely ineffective and quite dangerous. Ear canals have been seriously burned and eardrums have had candle wax melted on and through them. Independent researchers have concluded the debris found in the candle afterward, said to be earwax, is nothing more than the material from the burned candle itself.



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Better hearing. Doesn't that sound good?

# HEAR & NOW

## Patriot Center for Hearing Loss Newsletter

COMMUNICATION



STRATEGIES  
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Communication is not always easy even when you have two good ears. Throw in hearing loss and it can be quite frustrating. Often, hearing loss occurs gradually and it may take a while before the person with hearing loss realizes what they are missing. In the meantime, their listening skills have dulled. They have learned to tune things out because they became frustrated at not being able to hear clearly. Hearing aids help with this tremendously, but even with hearing aids, communication will go more smoothly and be more effective if the speaker takes some things into consideration.

The person with hearing loss has an impaired auditory system. It is very difficult for them to multi-task auditorily. Be sure to get their attention first by calling their name or tapping them on the shoulder. This helps them tune-in to what you are saying.

Don't expect the person with hearing aids to now have *superpower* hearing. The hearing aids assist them to hear better but they do not give them better than normal hearing. If the TV is on in one room and you are in another room, maybe with the water running or the dishwasher running, the hearing impaired person will not hear you. And you probably won't hear them clearly either. Have realistic expectations. Turn down distracting noises and come into the same room to talk.

People with hearing loss often develop lipreading skills. We all use this to some degree but those with hearing loss depend on it a bit more. Try to look at the person when you are talking to them and not cover your mouth or turn your back when you are talking. It is also easier to fill in the gaps if you know the context. If changing

you don't know the new topic of conversation.

Also, if you are the one with hearing loss, please don't yell from one room to another and then get frustrated when you can't hear the other person's response. Going to where the person is you wish to speak with makes for a much more pleasant experience.

Lastly, if you didn't understand something the first time, instead of saying "huh" and having someone repeat the whole thing, ask for the part you missed. For example, "Who went to the mall?" or "Where did you say you had lunch?"

Any other suggestions? Please write in your suggestions for improving communication. These are geared toward the hearing impaired and their loved ones but I think they are good common-courtesy rules we should all use! You can send suggestions via email to [hearingloss@bellsouth.net](mailto:hearingloss@bellsouth.net) or write us at P.O. Box 297, Jefferson City, TN 37760.

### Patriot Center for Hearing Loss

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Gerri Moore, Part-time Office Asst.

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



**ON THE HOMEFRONT-** Over the past several months, we have rescued two dogs...one was a puppy we witnessed being hit by a car back in February and the other was a small terrier we found wandering in the road near the highway here at the office in May. Several patients happened to see them in the office on the two separate occasions and have asked about them, so we wanted to give you all an update. We ended up keeping the injured puppy, who is now quite large at about 9 months of age. His name is Ricky Bobby and he is a laid-back country boy, just like his name suggests. He gets along great with his new brother and sister he shares a yard with as well as the pampered cats who stay indoors. The other little doggie was placed in a really nice home with two girls who lavish her with lots of attention, which she loves! They have named her Ella. (Notice the resemblance to our logo, Oto, right down to the one ear perked up!)



Ricky Bobby



Ella



Oto