

Hearing HealthCare News®

A newsletter for our patients, their families and friends

❄ Winter 2026

Making Television More Enjoyable

Difficulty with television is one of the most common complaints of people with hearing loss. Family members' complaints about television being too loud are often what make a person seek help.

Once someone gets help, family members are usually happy immediately. Unfortunately, although television volume may now be lower, hearing difficulties often remain. Difficulty understanding speech on television remains a common complaint of hearing aid users.

Why is television a challenge?

Rate: Televised speech is often twice as fast as normal conversation, making it much more difficult to understand.

Variety of speakers: There are often several different speakers on the same program, some who are easier to understand, and some who are not.

Background noise: Interfering noise can come from the television program itself and from the viewer's home.

The sound system: Televisions have small speakers and the quality of sound may not be ideal.

Making TV more enjoyable

There are several ways to improve television viewing. These include *closed captioning and augmentative systems*.

Closed captioning allows you to see written text displayed on the television screen. It's turned on using the menu button on your TV remote.

Augmentative systems transmit the sound directly to the viewer. These include infrared, and wireless Bluetooth connection. Infrared systems convert the TV sound to light waves and transmit them to the viewer, who wears a lightweight headset. With wireless connectivity, an adapter connected to the TV set wirelessly transmits the audio signal from your television set to hearing aids that are Bluetooth-enabled.

A recent study demonstrated the benefits of augmentative systems. Hearing aid users understood more than twice as much using the augmentative system. Why are these systems so helpful? These devices allow you to listen at whatever volume you choose and without being affected by room noise.

Are You Prepared for an Emergency?

Fortunately, tornadoes, thunderstorms, snowstorms and power outages are rare occurrences. Whatever the emergency, good communication is crucial for keeping informed and for staying in touch with family, friends and emergency personnel. People with hearing loss face a greater challenge during emergency conditions. Here are some tips:

Can I reach my friends and family?

Every household should have at least one landline or mobile phone, so your phone will work during a power outage. The phone should have a built-in or attachable amplifier if needed.



Will my cell phone work?

In an emergency, making cell phone calls may be difficult because of overloaded circuits. Text messages are more likely to get through busy circuits. Even if the message is not sent immediately, it's "in-line" to be sent when the line is available.

What about 911?

In certain areas you can text to 911 from your mobile device. However, this is only available in certain locations, so always make a voice call to 911 whenever possible.

Does Your Doctor Look for Hearing Loss?

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association,

"Hearing loss is a common chronic health condition and has important implications for patient quality of life. However, hearing loss is substantially undetected and untreated."

The authors recommended that physicians screen for hearing loss of all patients over the age of 55. Despite these recommendations, only about 10% of primary care physicians screen for hearing loss. You can be an advocate for hearing health! Ask your physician if he or she recommends hearing screening for their patients 55 years and older.

Will I be able to send and receive e-mails and get news on-line?

Install a back-up battery and power surge protector for your computer in case of a power outage.

Will I be able to get news bulletins?

Television stations are required to broadcast emergency warnings visually, as well as with sound (such as the "crawlers" at the bottom of the screen).

A good emergency radio means you won't be dependent on regular television broadcasts. Special radio receivers such as the Midland ER310-E+Ready and the Kaito KA500

have rechargeable batteries, hand crank power, weather scan, and attached flashlight.

Do I have a buddy system?

It's a good idea to have a nearby family member or friend to stay in touch with in case of an emergency. However, it's unreliable to count on someone else to alert you—they may be unreachable themselves.

Do I have enough emergency lighting?

You should have several battery-operated flashlights or lanterns. Some models can be left plugged into your household current and come on automatically in case of a power failure.

Emergencies happen rarely, but it still makes sense to follow the Scout approach—be prepared.

WELCOME

...to the Winter issue of our patient newsletter. We hope you find the information useful to you and to your family and friends.

Our practice is based on these fundamental principles:

- **Hearing loss is serious**
- **Hearing loss deserves professional care**
- **Hearing aids improve lives**

When You Hear Better You Feel Better

There is strong evidence linking untreated hearing loss to a number of other illnesses, including mental and brain health and depression.

For example, a survey of more than 3,000 adults found that those who did not get help for their hearing were less likely to participate in social activities and were more likely to report sadness, depression and anxiety. In another study, researchers at Columbia University's New York Presbyterian Hospital studied the relationship between hearing loss and depression in more than 5,000 adults from several major cities in the United States. The average age was 58 years.

Untreated hearing loss and depression

Although 18% of this group had hearing loss, fewer than 1% had gotten help for their hearing. Of the nearly 200 adults with very significant hearing loss, only about 25% used hearing aids.

The group that used hearing aids had significantly less depression, less risk of dementia and fewer serious falls.

The researchers found that the adults who had hearing loss and did not use hearing aids were about twice

as likely to experience depression than those without hearing loss.

Hearing aids make a difference

Apparently hearing aids can minimize these effects. A 2019 study of more than 110,000 adults with hearing loss found that the group who used hearing aids had less depression, significantly reduced risk of dementia, and fewer serious falls.

These findings support previous research indicating that hearing aids minimize the negative effects of hearing loss on overall health, including brain health. Hearing aids not only allow us to hear better—they also help us to feel better.

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*Happy
Holidays*

It's Time Again for Our Christmas Wish Tree

Duncan-Nulph Hearing Associates will be partnering with **East Pennsboro School District** to bring Christmas joy to less fortunate children in the area. We will have a **Christmas Wish Tree** located in the waiting room of our office from December 1st to December 12th.

If you would like to purchase a gift for a child this year, please stop by the office and choose a snowman ornament with a child's gift wish. All gifts should be delivered to our office by Thursday, December 18th, unwrapped with the tag from the tree. You may include wrapping paper with your gift, if so desired. We appreciate everyone that helps spread the holiday cheer!

Happy Holidays from the Staff at Duncan-Nulph Hearing Associates

Sincerely,

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Duncan-Nulph Hearing Associates

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