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San Marcos, TX 78666

HEARING EXCELLENCE SINCE 2009

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\*Restrictions apply. Contact Texan Renew Hearing Center for full details.

# HEARING AID BUYER'S GUIDE

Complimentary report to help you  
make the right choice when  
selecting hearing devices and a  
hearing professional.

How to avoid  
sales scams 101

5 Fabulous  
Free Offers

Hottest Trends:  
*Style & Technology*

RINGING IN YOUR EARS?  
See page 16 for a solution

Provided By:





**Three locations to serve you better!**

**300 S. CM Allen Pkwy. STE 300A  
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**519 N. King St., Ste 104  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE OWNER:

In order to help our clients better understand their options, we at Texan Renew Hearing Center compiled this complimentary report to help you make the right choice when selecting hearing devices and a hearing professional. This guide will help you ask the important questions of any Hearing Aid Specialist or Audiologist before you consider buying hearing devices. You are about to learn information about the hearing aid industry of which most consumers are unaware, which will help you ask better questions and make smarter decisions for your health and hearing. This Special Report will provide honest and no-nonsense information to hearing impaired individuals about their hearing device needs. Most, if not all, of your questions regarding hearing aids and hearing loss should be answered. Knowing this information could save you from opting for a hearing solution that doesn't match your lifestyle, which

is why we wanted to be as thorough as possible with our information. We hope that you select Texan Renew Hearing Center when you choose to have your hearing device choices evaluated, and we look forward to discussing your results and options. **This report will explain the costly mistakes others make, and how to avoid them. It will save you the frustration of being "sold" a product or service when you have little or no information to make an intelligent decision.** With this information, thousands of people will be able to learn about their options and make smarter decisions without having to leave the comfort of their homes. We've cut out the technical terms, theory, and "doctor-speak" **so you can better understand the information and make the right choices. In fact, after your hearing test, you may discover that you don't even need hearing devices. However... You May Need Hearing Devices If:**

- You have difficulty understanding the conversation in groups of people.
- Others often have to repeat what they have just said to you, or speak to you louder.
- Frequent requests for repeats embarrass you with strangers.
- Family or friends complain that you operate your TV or radio too loudly.
- Your hearing causes misunderstandings and arguments in your family.
- You avoid social activities because of your understanding difficulties.
- You have trouble understanding soft speech or whispers.



- You hear but don't always understand.
- You find that you hear better when you see a person's face.
- You accuse others of mumbling or speaking too softly.
- Your family members feel you may have a hearing loss.

This report will also expose some unethical practices used by other Hearing Care Professionals to sell hearing aids. After revealing their secrets, many of them will probably be upset at this information "leaking out." We will also cover the challenges faced by consumers when choosing different hearing aid options. It's not uncommon for hearing aid users to choose not to wear their hearing aids due to comfort or performance issues. Oftentimes the aids are simply "low-tech" and aren't adequate for

their hearing needs. The physical fit might be off or they might be programmed incorrectly. All of these problems can be solved by testing different options and working with your hearing professional. We hope you enjoy reading this valuable information and look forward to hearing from you!

### -Texan Renew Hearing Center- Three locations to serve you better!

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*Disclaimer: The following information is presented for educational purposes and should not substitute or replace the experience and advice of a Hearing Care Professional.*

# INDEPENDENT VS. CORPORATE MANUFACTURER CHAINS

**T**exan Renew Hearing Center created this objective Special Report to help you become better informed about hearing loss and hearing correction.

The hearing industry becomes more confusing as technology advances, and as more choices become available, it becomes more difficult to separate the information needed to make informed choices about hearing health care and your quality of life!

Knowledge is power, and this Special Report should provide you with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions about your hearing device purchases, maintenance, and repairs.

## INDEPENDENT BUSINESS VS. CORPORATE MANUFACTURER CHAINS

Did you know that many Hearing Aid Centers are corporate owned? Several of the top hearing aid manufacturers own and control these chains. The manufacturer that owns or controls the office you're in will directly influence the decisions being made about what product to recommend for your hearing correction needs. An independent provider, like Texan Renew Hearing Center, can recommend the appropriate product based on your hearing loss, your lifestyle and your budget; regardless of manufacturer. We all have manufacturers that we prefer, (mostly because of quality, service and comfort zones in product knowledge) but there is no limitation to which manufacturer

is selected. Many choices are available today from various manufacturers, even though the top 5 are the only ones that actually manufacture their own parts. Hundreds of hearing devices are available, and no single manufacturer has the best of everything. As the technology advances, one manufacturer might have the best solution for you at that time, but another might have a better solution a few years later when you may be considering replacing current technology with something more advanced. This is not to say that corporate chains are not capable of offering satisfactory products or that their staff are not competent professionals; however, the very nature of these operations makes it problematic for the professionals to be freely objective. Like any business, technicians have to follow the corporate policies that are motivated financially with company focused product lines. **Most devices purchased through a chain are only programmable from their own company-owned stores.**

## ARE YOU BETTER OFF?

If you don't like the service, or the location closes its doors and the next closest store is 100 miles away, it's very difficult to have your devices serviced locally. Only their "brand name" labeled devices are programmable outside of their corporate owned stores. You may be better off researching a manufacturer whose product interests you and find the nearest independent retailer that sells and services those devices. Keep in mind that reputation is everything. Private labeling is a deliberate corporate measure to keep you within their internal offices. This tactic is rarely in the consumer's best interest because of service, programming and repair issues. By finding their independent counterpart, all you have to do is find another business that carries the product locally.

*"Blindness cuts  
us off from things,  
but deafness cuts us  
off from people."*

*-Helen Keller*

# Baseline Hearing Test

Your Hearing Professional should always recommend a baseline hearing test beginning at age 40 for those without any previous hearing concerns.

**H**earing loss is sneaky. It begins slowly, often in your mid-40s, and many people ignore the symptoms at first. Unfortunately, this “ignoring” stage can last for years while your hearing is deteriorating. At first it seems like everyone else is the cause of the problem. People mumble, you begin answering them incorrectly, you miss the punch line of a joke or conversations in noisy environments are difficult to follow. You may be unable to understand television programs and phone conversations. Unfortunately, the longer you wait, the worse it gets. You could be jeopardizing your ability to understand speech, even after you make the decision to correct your hearing loss. Hearing loss can affect all aspects of life and can leave you feeling isolated from the rest of your world.

Regardless of age, it's never good to feel shut off from life, so take action if you experience any of these symptoms:

- Do family, coworkers or friends often have to repeat what they say?
- Do you experience frustration from not understanding others?
- Do you hear but not always understand?
- Do you have trouble understanding speech on television at normal or elevated volume levels?
- Do you have trouble understanding speech when background noise is present?
- Are you embarrassed about being unable to hear when meeting new people?

There is nothing to lose! Free hearing tests are available for those seeking hearing correction and your hearing can be monitored annually. When hearing loss begins to reveal itself in the early stages, appropriate correction can be recommended to accomplish the best possible solution.

## YOU'RE NOT ALONE: HEARING LOSS IS A FACT OF LIFE FOR BABY BOOMERS

Baby Boomers are America's largest segment of society and have endured a greater increase in noise pollution than any other generation. Prolonged and/or loud noise exposure is overtaking age as the leading cause of hearing loss. Baby Boomers are living longer than any previous generation, resulting in the largest number of people ever to face the effects of hearing loss. In fact, about 40 percent of hearing-impaired Americans are under the age of 65. Twenty percent of Americans -- more than 48 million of us -- experience some degree of hearing loss. At age 65, 1 in 3 people have hearing loss.

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHETHER YOU MIGHT BENEFIT FROM HEARING DEVICES?

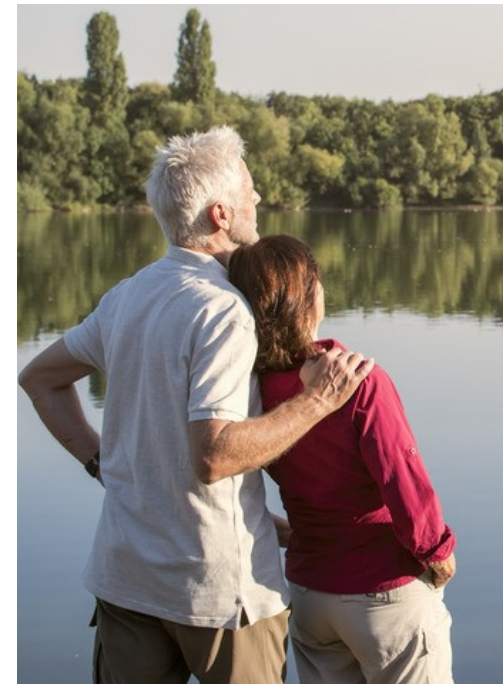
In February 2007, the Journal of the American Academy of Audiology published articles on the social, economic, and psychological effects of hearing loss and the impact hearing devices have on these areas. In summary: ***“Hearing device use greatly improves adults’ health related quality of life by reducing psychological, social, and emotional effects of hearing loss — an insidious and potentially devastating chronic health condition.”*** The report also adds that hearing devices are a low risk option that consumers can try to address a condition for which there is no other viable treatment.

## TYPES OF HEARING LOSS

**1. Conductive loss:** Conductive hearing loss is usually treated with medication, or on some occasions, surgery. Conductive hearing loss has many causes, including middle ear malfunction and earwax buildup.

**2. Sensorineural loss:** Sensorineural hearing loss is the most common form of hearing loss and is often associated with the aging ear and noise exposure. This type of hearing loss is most often treated with hearing devices or ALDs (assistive listening devices).

**3. Mixed loss:** Mixed hearing loss is usually treated with a combination of hearing devices and medical treatment.







## STYLE & TECHNOLOGY

**H**earing device “technology” refers to the circuitry inside a hearing device. Think of the circuitry as a tiny little computer chip that is automatically making decisions without the wearer being involved.

This technology is what defines the price point of a hearing device, and most technologies are available in a variety of styles.

“Style” refers to the size and shape of a device. A hearing device might be a behind-the-ear style, or a tiny in-the-canal style.

Style can also refer to the extended wear or the “open ear” style that is most popular based on its comfort, design, technology and appearance.

# THE RISE OF BLUETOOTH

Prior to Bluetooth hearing aids, the wearer struggled with many personal audio devices such as mobile phones and music players.

When listening to a music player, the hearing aid wearer had to remove their hearing aids to accommodate a pair of earbuds; however, today’s wireless hearing aids make it possible for the hearing impaired individual to connect with personal electronic devices and stream signals directly to the hearing aid through the use of Bluetooth.

## WHAT IS BLUETOOTH?

Developed through the collaboration of leading technology firms, Bluetooth is a wireless communication platform that allows for the transfer of data (like audio) between two or more electronic devices.

The technology uses radio waves set to a high frequency to transmit data without interference or security risks. A wide variety of products incorporating Bluetooth connectivity have been developed, and we commonly see it in today’s smartphones and tablets.

## WIFI MOBILE CONNECT FOR HEARING AIDS

MobileConnect is an Assistive Listening system for everybody, especially those with hearing correction. It delivers high-fidelity sound to your ears through your hearing aids or ear buds from your mobile phone.

A Wi-Fi based system designed for venues that enable transmission of audio content to mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets and transmits that audio to your hearing aids. Most hearing aids today and for the last several years have been made to include Bluetooth for wireless streaming of audio signal to your hearing aids whether you are aware if it or not. Ask your hearing care professional if your hearing aids are wireless compatible.

Just imagine entering your local airport, movie theater, live entertainment or place of worship and with a tap of the MobileConnect APP, you are wirelessly connected to their Wi-Fi audio broadcasts. You will be able to hear public address messages as well as countless other content and entertainment driven audio. The system embraces the bring-your-own device (BYOD) principle enabling users to use their own mobile devices on the MobileConnect WiFi network.

The Personal Hearing Assistant allows for a truly intuitive sound adjustment. The audio signal can be adjusted easily according to individual hearing needs – not only the volume of the audio signal, but also more sophisticated sound parameters that affect speech intelligibility.

# Current Hearing Device Style

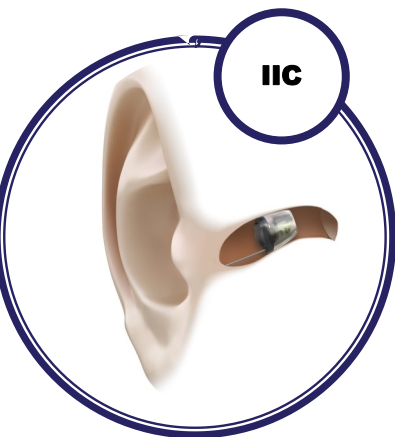
## BEHIND-THE-EAR

For many years, behind the ear hearing devices were the most common; however, today they've lost popularity. This is because original BTEs have been replaced with much smaller and more advanced RIC, or receiver in the ear, devices.

**BTE**



**IIC**



## INVISIBLE IN CANAL

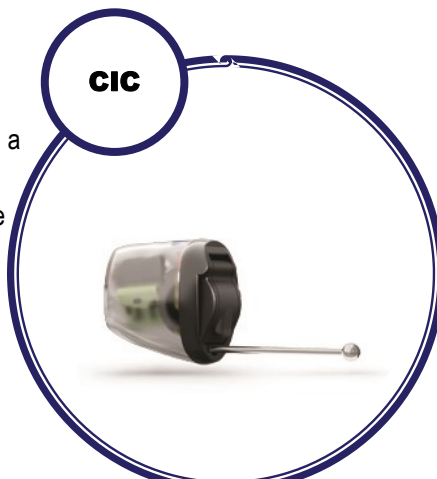
This is one of the newest device styles available. It's the first daily-wear hearing device that is 100% invisible. IIC is offered by several manufacturers and has proved to be a very successful device with exceptionally high client satisfaction ratings.

Unlike all other hearing devices, the IIC is positioned completely inside the ear canal, so it uses your ear's anatomy to provide natural sound quality.

## COMPLETELY-IN-THE-CANAL

Prior to the introduction of the Receiver In Canal (or RIC), the CIC was gaining popularity. Wearers enjoyed the idea of having a device better hidden than any other option available at the time. The Completely In-The-Canal hearing device isn't always visible to the wearer, but is still visible to others. This style of device is not to be confused with the IIC.

**CIC**



## RECEIVER IN THE CANAL

The RIC hearing devices are technically also behind-the-ear style, although they've proven to be more comfortable and offer a more natural correction because the receiver is directly in the ear canal. RIC hearing devices are now the most popular style of hearing device, and are typically smaller than the traditional BTE style. A thin plastic tube houses the speaker wire and transmits the amplified sounds down into the ear canal through the speaker. The tubing is virtually invisible. Not all devices are created equal. Manufacturers also offer a thin sound tube in order to deliver the sound into the ear. The superior and preferable RIC receiver (or speaker) placed inside the ear canal provides significant improved sound quality while allowing for the canal to remain open as possible.

In addition to its cosmetic appeal, the RIC design avoids the occlusion or "stopped up" feeling of in-the-ear hearing devices. Many describe the occlusion effect as having a bucket on their head or feeling as though they are in a tunnel all the time. Originally designed to fit only high frequency hearing loss, RIC styles are now even smaller and can fit a wide range of hearing loss. The owners of Texan Renew Hearing Center were pioneering contributors and early adopters of the receiver in the ear open-fit technology.

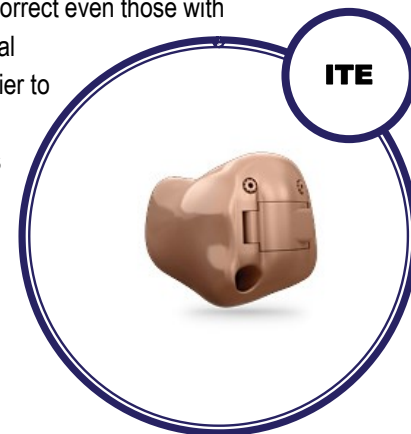
**RIC**



## IN-THE-EAR

Today, the ITE hearing device provides the ability to correct even those with severe hearing loss. This is mostly due to technological improvements and feedback controls. This size is easier to handle for wearers with poor dexterity, and utilizes a battery size that typically provides for up to two weeks of use.. ITEs also allows for additional features such as directional microphones and additional memory programs.

**ITE**



# ONE HEARING DEVICE OR TWO?

The benefit of wearing one hearing device as opposed to wearing two can usually be determined by asking three questions:

## ONE:

Is hearing expected to improve with binaural (both ears) amplification?

## TWO:

Are you seeking the best correction possible for all listening environments?

## Three:

If both ears have hearing loss, which ear's correction and speech understanding are you prepared to sacrifice?

Having proper hearing correction is almost always dependent on a "binaural fitting," which means correction in both ears. (Of course, there are some exceptions. Texan Renew Hearing Center will discuss your personal situation during your comprehensive hearing exam and consultation.)

Binaural fittings offer many advantages including:

- Improved speech understanding in noisy environments
- Less amplification needed in each individual ear, as our ears are naturally designed to work in tandem
- Balanced hearing correction
- Consistent auditory stimulation resulting in improved speech understanding (or word discrimination)

Binaural fittings result in greater speech understanding, especially in difficult listening environments. The brain determines localization of sound, and as sound arrives at different times and intensities, we are able to determine the direction of the sound source. This can only be achieved with binaural correction. **Research and client experience tell us overwhelmingly that wearing two hearing devices is better than one.** Of course, there are occasional exceptions, but again, these can be determined during the comprehensive hearing evaluation.

# SALES SCAMS 101

*You are reading the newspaper looking over all those confusing hearing device aids. What should you look for? Are you really getting a good deal with great value?*

## #1 BAIT-AND-SWITCH

Some hearing businesses offer poor quality devices with limited and dated technology for an unbelievable price, knowing full well that the fitting capabilities of these devices are very limited and the quality of the products are antiquated. You make an appointment for your new \$499 devices and soon discover after your hearing assessment that you do not qualify for that special priced hearing device because your hearing loss is not matched with the product capabilities. You are offered a more appropriate hearing device for your hearing loss. The product offered is a private label HA100 hearing aid with all the wonderful bells and whistles for only \$1,995 each. If you want the best device they have it will cost \$3,500 each. Now you are faced with your predetermined budget inflating to 3 times what you thought you were going to spend.

Unfortunately, some within the hearing industry use this technique frequently in order to entice consumers. They advertise hearing aids for \$299 or \$399 each, so the consumer is led to believe they can receive proper hearing correction at these prices. Is it possible to purchase a hearing device for this price? Perhaps, although most reputable companies do not offer devices at this price range due to the poor technology and overall dissatisfaction. Will these devices

be satisfactory? No! Chances are very good that you will be told those hearing devices are not for your "type" or "degree" of hearing loss. These prices are only advertised to draw the customers in the door so they can be sold a much more expensive hearing device. By that point, the pressure of the sale intimidates the customer to purchase a product from the very company that has tricked them in the first place.

## #2 BOGO SCAM

Many hearing aid businesses offer BOGO incentives enticing consumers to believe they are getting a deal: a free or half-off hearing aid when they buy one at regular price. It may be true that they are getting a free or half-off hearing aid, but at what cost? The BOGO price is based on the MSRP (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price). Mr. Smith is looking over his local newspaper reviewing all the hearing aid ads trying to make sense of them. He comes across a great sounding deal of BOGO (buy one, get one). The hearing aid MSRP is \$3,500 and he can have two devices for the price of one!

Mr. Smith buys his set of hearing aids for \$3,500. He has saved \$3,500 for the second hearing aid and feels he has made a good decision on his investment. What Mr. Smith doesn't realize is that model of hearing aid is normally sold for \$1,500 each or a set for \$3,000. The BOGO pricing actually cost \$500 more than the regularly priced set.



# TINNITUS

*That annoying ringing in your ears...*



Tinnitus is a condition resulting in ringing in the ears when no actual sound is present. It is not a disease itself, rather a side effect of a number of causes, including exposure to loud noises, ear infections, multiple sclerosis, stress, allergies, nasal congestion, earwax build-up, and as a side effect or form of withdrawal from certain medications. Even whiplash from a car accident or migraine headaches can cause tinnitus. The most common cause of tinnitus is due to noise-induced hearing loss.

Approximately 20% of people age 55 - 65 reported tinnitus-like symptoms on a general health questionnaire. The symptoms experienced by people with tinnitus include ringing, buzzing,

hissing, roaring, and even clicking noises in the ear.

There are two different types of tinnitus: Subjective tinnitus and objective tinnitus. Subjective tinnitus is the most common form of the condition, in which only you can hear the noises. This form of tinnitus is caused by problems with the outer, middle, or the inner ear and may be caused by how the nerves in your brain interpret sound.

Objective tinnitus is a form of tinnitus that your doctor can actually hear when performing an examination on you. It is far less common than subjective tinnitus and can be caused by muscular contractions, blood vessels not functioning properly, or a

condition involving the inner ear bones.

There is a very common misperception that tinnitus makes it harder to hear. Tinnitus can be annoying and affect your ability to concentrate, but it has very little impact on hearing. If you're having trouble hearing, it is probably related to some degree of hearing loss. Even a slight degree of hearing loss can affect hearing, and can be noticeable in noisier environments, like a restaurant.

Tinnitus is also associated with an abnormal sensitivity to sound (i.e. water running in the sink), known as hyperacusis. It can also relate to negative emotions/reactions to certain sounds (i.e. anger, anxiety), known as mysophobia.

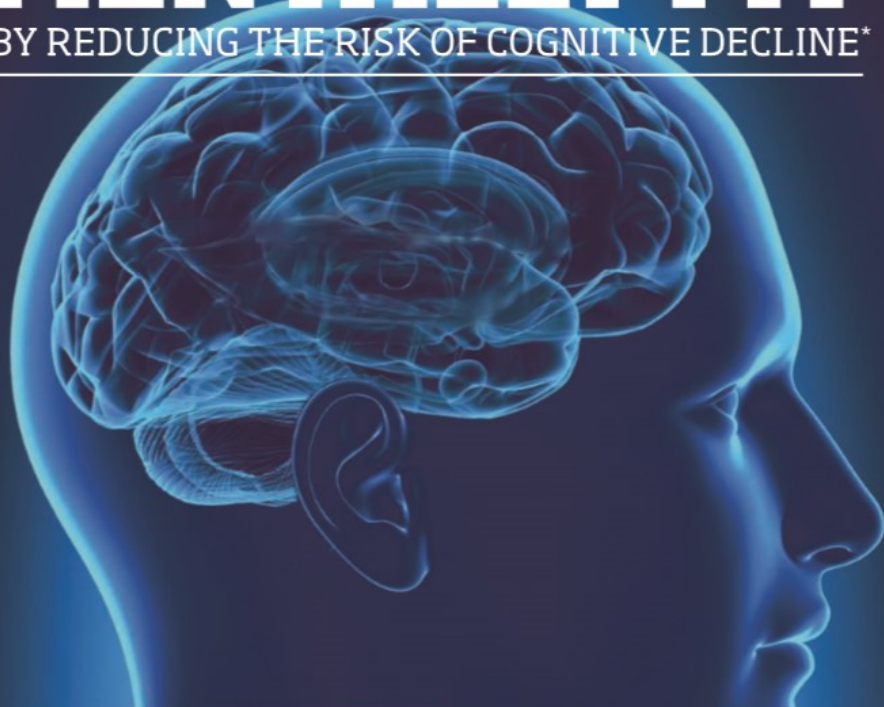
Treatment options for tinnitus have been researched for many years and the literature indicates various options that are very successful. You don't just have to learn to live with it!

A thorough examination of your ears at our San Marcos, Seguin or Floresville office can diagnose tinnitus. Our hearing specialists can then help devise an appropriate course of treatment and/or correction. In most cases, tinnitus symptoms go away with the proper treatment, but it's important to determine the underlying cause first. If you're suffering from ringing or buzzing in your ears, contact Texan Renew Hearing Center to schedule a hearing exam.

Actively using hearing aids helps keep you

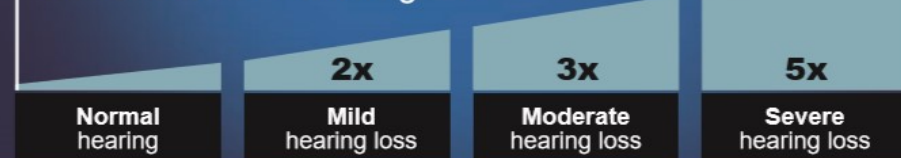
# MENTALLY FIT

BY REDUCING THE RISK OF COGNITIVE DECLINE\*



Long-term study is a wake-up call to address the risks of untreated hearing loss.

**Risk of dementia**  
with UNTREATED hearing loss



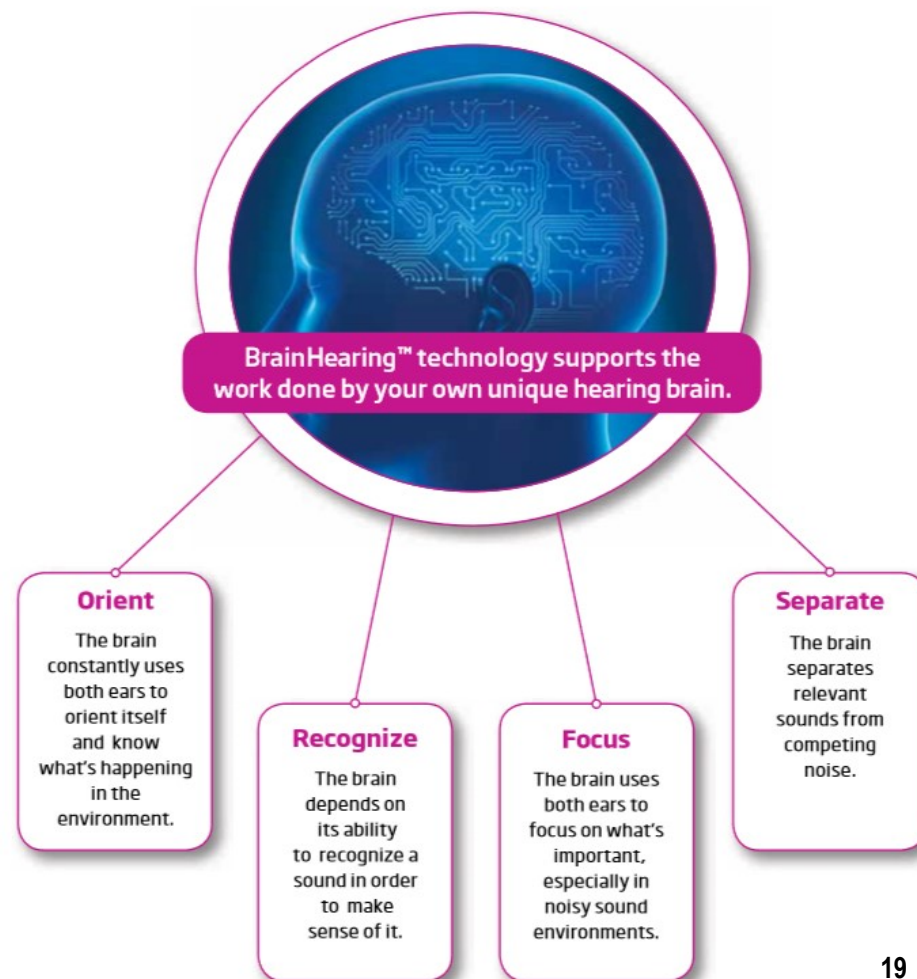
Source: Lin et al. (2011). Compared with normal hearing, increased risk of dementia: 1.89 for mild hearing loss, 3.00 for moderate hearing loss, and 4.94 for severe hearing loss.

# HEAR SMARTER. LIVE BETTER.

The Link between hearing loss and cognitive decline.

*It is well established that untreated hearing loss can lead to an acceleration of cognitive decline.*

## IT ALL STARTS WITH THE BRAIN.



# Actively

using hearing aids  
reduces the risk of  
cognitive decline.

Hearing loss is associated with accelerated cognitive decline and possibly also with the onset of dementia in older adults. The vast majority of scientists in the area have agreed that cognitive decline is likely related to the lack of social interaction that older adults have because of their hearing loss.

A new study, "Self-Reported Hearing Loss: Hearing Aids and Cognitive Decline in Elderly Adults: A 25-year Study", just published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, compared the trajectory of cognitive decline among older adults who were using hearing aids and those who were not. The study found no difference in the rate of cognitive decline between people with no reported hearing loss and people with hearing loss who used hearing aids.

This study corroborates the assumption that, if people use hearing aids and thus become socially active again or are able to maintain an appropriate level of social activity then they would decrease their risk of a more rapid decline in cognitive skills.

## Putting the brain first

BrainHearing™ describes the approach used when creating solutions for those with hearing loss. It starts with the fundamental observation that speech understanding is a cognitive process – it happens in the brain.

The BrainHearing™ approach focuses on managing sound so that the brain is provided with the most complete sound picture possible. Of course we want to create an excellent signal-to-noise ratio when that is possible, but we also want to provide a complete, natural sound picture.

The role of amplification is to feed the brain the very best information possible. The goal is to preserve information in the details of the speech waveform and to provide a complete picture of where sound comes from. This provides the hearing instrument user with the most complete, most natural and most successful listening experience possible.

## UNTREATED HEARING LOSS CAN ALSO LEAD TO OTHER GENERAL HEALTH ISSUES.

### Did You Know...

The symptoms of early stages of **dementia** are very similar to the symptoms of uncorrected hearing loss.

Untreated hearing loss results in poorer quality of life, social interaction and **isolation**. This can lead to depression.

Some doctors diagnose their patients with early stages of dementia when it **COULD** just be hearing loss that requires correction.

Adults with untreated hearing loss, even of a mild degree, are 3 times more likely to experience **falls**. Research suggests that the brain may not be able to focus on **balance and gait** when it is struggling to hear.

There is a **heart-hearing** connection. Inadequate blood flow and trauma to the blood vessels of the inner ear can contribute to hearing loss. The inner ear is so sensitive to blood flow that it is possible that abnormalities in the cardiovascular systems could be noted here earlier than in other less sensitive parts of the body.

Hearing loss is twice as common in people with **diabetes** compared to those who don't have diabetes. 86 million adults in the US have pre-diabetes. The rate of hearing loss is 30 percent higher than those with normal blood glucose levels.

What may appear to be **memory issues** could be misinterpreting information or "missing" details due to an untreated hearing loss.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## What is a digital hearing device?

Digital hearing devices make up almost 95% of all hearing devices sold today.

This technology utilizes bands or channels to process sound independently, customizing the amplification to your specific hearing loss.

Since these devices are programmable, the skillset of your hearing professional can dramatically impact the overall satisfaction that you receive from your hearing devices. Inaccurate programming is one of the major reasons consumers report dissatisfaction with their current devices.

## Will I have to regularly upgrade my hearing device?

Unlike eyeglasses, you should not have to purchase new devices every time your hearing shifts. Today's digital devices can have the programming changed, so as your hearing changes, the programming changes to match. This should be taken into consideration every time new hearing devices are recommended. The hearing professional's knowledge of accurate programming and available "growing room" is critical to your overall success.

## What is the best hearing device on the market?

This by far is the most commonly asked question. There are a variety of very good major brands, but there is no single "best hearing device" for everyone. Your personal hearing loss and the needs for your specific lifestyle will be the critical factors in determining the best hearing device on the market for you. This is one

of the reasons why an independent hearing business is able to provide an objective point of view.

## I've worn hearing devices before. Will the newer digital hearing devices improve my experience?

We have seen tremendous advances in hearing device features over the past few years. Due to microchip advancements, customer satisfaction ratings are at an all-time high. Most consumers desire technology to improve their hearing when background noise is present and to minimize feedback.

## What happens if I am not happy with my hearing devices?

A reputable hearing business will always offer a satisfaction guarantee. In addition, trial periods vary from state to state. In Texas you are protected with a 30-day trial period. During the first 30 days, you may return the hearing devices for any reason. Individual guidelines vary, but you can expect all of your money refunded to you except for a possible service fee to cover basic expenses for the professional's time. Those fees vary, so please be sure to ask for specific policies regarding return refunds.

During your first 30 days while you adjust to your new hearing devices, you should expect plenty of opportunities to work with your hearing professional to have possible programming adjustments and counseling on care, use and maintenance. If your devices don't meet your needs, you should be given the option of exchanging the devices for a different make or model.

## What features should I look for in a hearing device?

Again, this question can only be answered after your hearing professional understands your specific hearing loss, lifestyle and budget. It's easy to speak about the technology in the top devices and why each piece of technology is important, but that does not necessarily mean that you will need all of those features. There is, however, a combination of advanced features that provide greater satisfaction. Our clients, typically, are most satisfied with hearing devices that include the following features:

1. **Directional Microphones:** Today all levels of technology include more than one microphone. This is useful when the wearer is in noisy environments. The microphones separate unwanted background sounds from wanted speech sounds. By doing so, the unwanted sounds from the back and sides of the wearer are reduced, allowing for better speech understanding. Many top-level products incorporate automatic directional microphones, which require no interaction from the wearer.
2. **Multiple Compression Channels:** With millisecond timing, your hearing device will react quickly enough to increase the volume for crucial speech sounds, lower it for louder ambient noises, and protect the wearer from sudden loud sounds like slamming doors. This advancement has been very beneficial in keeping the wearer comfortable in all listening environments.
3. **Multiple Programs:** Having multiple programs in digital devices allow the user to experience better hearing in different and often difficult listening environments. The programs allow the wearer to change the manner in which the hearing device processes sound when moving from one environment to another, providing more control over various listening situations. The more advanced hearing devices available today have little or no need for multiple programs due to automatic features that adjust the hearing device for each listening environment. Some devices require a remote in order to manually change to additional programs.
4. **Noise Reduction:** This technology allows for more comfort when listening to speech in difficult or noisy situations. Noise reduction also reduces wind noise when outside (but does not eliminate it). Noise reduction is available in different levels of technology and therefore varies in its effectiveness. It is important to understand that having noise reduction in hearing devices does not mean all background noise is eliminated. Remember: people without hearing loss hear all noises without the option of having a device remove what they do not want to hear. Noise reduction assists in keeping the wearer more comfortable, but will not take away all unwanted sounds.
5. **Feedback Cancellation:** Feedback is the technical term for that annoying squealing sound that happens to all hearing devices when you completely cover the device with your hands (when the device is turned on). Advanced feedback cancellation systems have allowed for greater clarity of important speech and is also instrumental in the advent of the open-fit devices. Until these feedback systems were improved, it was impossible to keep the ear canal open and amplify sound into the ear without experiencing feedback.

## **What are the differences between various hearing device manufacturers?**

There can be significant differences in quality and performance when comparing today's major brands and levels of technology. While there are more than 20 major hearing device manufacturers and hundreds of models to choose from, only about five companies in the market today invest in research and design of the digital circuits. We recommend those brands of hearing devices based on proven quality, digital processing, reliability, warranties and (most importantly) client satisfaction. In every case, your Hearing Healthcare Professional should recommend the best hearing device for your unique hearing loss, budget, lifestyle and personal needs.

## **How do I choose a Hearing Care Professional?**

Not all hearing professionals are created equal. As with all industries, there are great professionals and not so great ones. The only thing more important than the quality of a hearing device is the quality, integrity and competency of the hearing professional. Regardless of titles, degrees or affiliations, the individual's reputation and client referrals are the only true factors when determining the right professional for you. All Hearing Healthcare Professionals should be able to provide real life testimonials from satisfied clients. Again, referrals and reputation are the best measures of competency.

## **Will my hearing become worse if I wait to purchase hearing devices?**

Aging takes its toll on our ability to hear and understand. In addition to the aging factor, we know that noise exposure is also a huge contributor to hearing loss and this is true whether or not we use hearing devices. However, the ability to make sense of what we hear (discrimination of sounds)

deteriorates more rapidly if the hearing pathway is not stimulated. Therefore, a decision to delay wearing hearing amplification will not cause hearing to become worse, but will decrease your speech comprehension. This can become permanent if not properly treated, making it more difficult to benefit from hearing devices later on. Your hearing professional should always take the time to educate you about the nerve function of the inner ear and its critical need to be stimulated with amplification. This needed auditory stimulation is an excellent reason for acting on your hearing loss sooner rather than later. Unfortunately, we see many people make the mistake of waiting to invest in hearing healthcare because they feel their hearing "isn't bad enough." Many people have serious regret about their decision to put off their hearing correction once they learn they have irreversible damage that may have been avoided.

## **How much do hearing devices cost?**

Pricing depends on the technology recommended for an individual's hearing loss. This is determined after a comprehensive hearing test is completed and your Hearing Healthcare Professional has had an opportunity to learn more about your lifestyle needs. Please keep in mind that over 90% of people are fit with 2 devices because they have a hearing loss in both ears. Prices range from \$995+ each for the best budget-level digital device to the most advanced digital products at around \$3,000 each. There are very real differences in the technology that define the pricing range. Wearers who try different levels of technology almost always report a notable difference in satisfaction. The old saying "you get what you pay for" indeed applies when purchasing hearing correction. Note: purchasing the most expensive hearing device does not guarantee your satisfaction. The competency of the professional

and their ability to properly program the device will play a critical role in the experienced sound quality and overall satisfaction of your device. If you do not feel as though your hearing professional is educated on the latest technology, they probably are not and you should trust your instincts and look elsewhere. Again, accurate programming is every bit as important as the quality of the device selected. When purchasing hearing devices, you should ensure you are paying the fairest prices for the best hearing devices. Pricing should include all fittings and needed reprogramming as well as a minimum of one year of follow-up services.

## **What about buying a hearing device online and unbundling?**

The Internet is a fabulous tool for learning and buying a variety of items, but NOT for purchasing hearing devices. Unlike many products and services bought online, it is illegal in many states to dispense hearing devices online. Many manufacturers understand the liabilities associated with selling their products online and have established policies stating that they will not warranty any of their products bought online. The manufacturers understand that hearing aids are medical devices and if dispensed improperly can cause irreversible harm to the unsuspecting consumer. You may initially be under the impression that you save money when buying online, but you will pay handsomely to have them programmed, cleaned, updated, serviced and repaired, far beyond the cost of buying them locally from a reputable business. Unbundling is becoming more popular these days when purchasing online. Unbundling refers to separating the hearing aid cost from the practice's continuing care and follow up services.

## **What is included in the cost of hearing devices when I make a purchase?**

You can typically expect the hearing devices, batteries for the trial period, standard manufacturer's repair warranty, a loss & damage warranty, 30-day trial period, all fitting fees and at least one year's service. There should be no hidden costs and your hearing healthcare professional should take the time to explain what is included under your warranty plan and what is not. Additional years of warranty can be purchased at the time of the sale or you can purchase additional years later. The key is to not allow your device to run out of warranty. Manufacturers will not sell an extended warranty if the regular warranty has already run out.

**What payment options are available?** Most hearing businesses accept payment by cash, check and credit card, and some also offer payment plans as well as some insurance companies. Payment options may include 12 months interest-free with a low minimum payment. Qualification can be determined over the phone in just a few minutes.

**I see so many confusing advertisements in my newspaper for "hundreds even thousands of dollars off" a digital hearing device, "First 25 people wanted for a study," and "buy one get one free." Are these advertisements for real and should I take them seriously?** Many reputable hearing professionals feel these ads are designed to be misleading and confusing. In addition, do you really think any manufacturer provides a "free" hearing aid? The reality is that they are inflating prices in order to make it seem like you are getting something for free. Companies using this type of misleading advertising tactics to gain your interest should be avoided or - at the very least - approached with extreme caution.





## HEARING DEVICE COMPARISON LIST

In order to provide an easy to understand comparison, we have prepared the following list as you consider a hearing device purchase for you or a loved one. Today's hearing device choices are greater than ever before, but remember, there is not one "best" hearing device for everyone.

Although there are hundreds of hearing devices to choose from, it's easiest to make your decision based on three categories from each manufacturer: basic entry level, mid-level and premium level. It is often easier to think of these price levels as good, better and best.

There are other comparisons available, but we have simplified ours to illustrate what our clients are requesting and to explain what we recommend as the most important features for someone's hearing loss and lifestyle. Many of these features were reserved only for premium hearing devices; however, many mid-level priced hearing devices now offer them as well.

### ENTRY LEVEL ("GOOD" CATEGORY)

- Price range from \$995 to \$1500 per device
- Usually only 1 listening program (memory)
- Manual program changes (if additional programs are available)
- Noise reduction may be offered but will not be as satisfactory as the more advanced devices
- Single microphones (although some manufacturers offer dual microphones within the entry level)
- Expect a one-year manufacturer repair warranty
- Basic feedback cancellation system
- Frequency response includes all speech sounds (up to 6,000 hertz)

### MID LEVEL ("BETTER" CATEGORY)

- Price range from \$1600 to \$2500 per device
- Multiple listening programs (memories)
- Automatic program changes, does not require the wearer to press buttons
- Adaptive noise reduction
- Directional microphones
- Expect a minimum of one or two-year manufacturer repair warranty
- More advanced feedback cancellation system
- Frequency response up to 8000 hertz

### PREMIUM LEVEL ("BEST" CATEGORY)

- Price range from \$2600 to \$3500 per device
- Automatic multiple listening programs (provides different hearing programs when exposed to various sound environments)
- Advanced noise reduction circuitry
- Data logging (device logs your sound environments allowing for more specific programming adjustments by your hearing professional)
- Minimum of a two-year manufacturer repair warranty
- Advanced feedback cancellation system
- Frequency response over 8000 hertz. The very best devices are now providing responses up to 12,000 hertz
- Wireless Bluetooth connectivity
- Wireless communication between both hearing devices (allowing for many advantages including enhanced ability to locate the origin of sounds)



# *Hearing Device*

## *Maintenance, CARE, and repairs.*

Your hearing device is not working. What do you do? At Texan Renew Hearing Center, we have seen every type of hearing aid repair and have heard our fair share of disappointing stories from clients about places they have gone for service in the past. From humidity to family pets, your hearing devices are under attack on a daily basis. How do you know if the problem is something small or a major (and potentially expensive) issue?

1. **Check for a Dead Battery.** When your hearing device stops working, first check to see if the battery is dead. Dead hearing aid batteries are the number one cause for hearing aid failure. Hearing device battery testers can be purchased for just a few dollars from most hearing stores and will take the guesswork out of your battery status.
2. **Clean Earwax Out of Your Device.** If it's not a dead battery that's causing your device to malfunction, it's likely something as simple as wax blocking the speaker from delivering the sound to your ear. This may also be why you can't hear any feedback when you test it in your hand. Most of today's hearing devices have wax caps. These caps help to protect the speaker from earwax, which is very corrosive to the components

of the hearing device speaker. Cleaning or changing these wax caps can make all the difference.

Regular maintenance is important. Knowing how to perform regular maintenance to your hearing device could save you hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars. If you do not know how to perform regular care and maintenance to your hearing devices, speak with your hearing care professional and have them instruct you on simple daily care and maintenance. If you are unable to obtain the knowledge you need to understand regular care and maintenance, there are countless sources available to help you. The first place to look is the website of your hearing device manufacturer. Before finding a local hearing aid business to assess your problematic hearing device, do the following: (1) Change the battery with a fresh one directly from the package (2) Clean the speaker and microphone ports (3) Change the wax cap (if your hearing device has one) (4) Refer to your Instruction manual supplied when you purchased your hearing device. Again, an overwhelming number of repairs are very simple and are mostly dead batteries or earwax in the speaker. In some cases, the microphones can be clogged with dry skin, hair spray or body oils, which will not allow the

hearing aid to pick up the sound. If you have performed the above checklist and your device is still weak or unresponsive, then it's time to find a reputable place for servicing your hearing device. By problem solving on your own first, you limit the chances of being taken advantage of. Many of the devices brought into our office have ended up needing little more than a small in-house repair or a professional cleaning to remove wax from the receiver. These small repairs would likely be free or have a small inhouse service charge of just a few dollars.

## **HELP! MY HEARING AID CONSTANTLY WHISTLES**

Is your hearing aid squealing or whistling? Whatever you wish to call it, feedback is annoying. Modern hearing devices have a very advanced feedback management process. Even the most advanced feedback management systems fall victim to earwax occluding the ear canal or to devices fitting poorly. Earwax is a normal and natural occurrence that cannot be avoided. Regular and proper wax management helps to prevent wax buildup in your ears causing feedback to occur in your hearing aid. Your "ENT" (Ear Nose and Throat) physician, audiologist or any Hearing Healthcare Professional that is certified in cerumen "earwax" removal can easily help you with wax removal and wax management. Poorly fitting devices are also a major reason for your hearing aids whistling. Over time (usually two to three years after your original fitting) gaps can form. Because our ears continue to grow and expand throughout our lives, gaps between your ear and your hearing device can cause feedback.

These problems can easily be corrected with new impressions of your ears so your devices can be re-cased or your molds for BTE's can be remade. This will most likely eliminate your feedback problems for a fraction of the cost of buying new devices.

## **HELP! TEXAS HUMIDITY DESTROYS MY DEVICES**

If humidity and earwax are your hearing devices' worst enemies, then a hearing aid dryer is your hearing devices' best friend. Humidity, sweat and daily moisture corrode the components of your hearing aid from the inside out. Buying a high quality hearing aid dryer for under \$100 will save you hundreds in repairs over the life of your device and will also extend the life expectancy of your devices.

## **REMEMBER THE WARRANTY**

Purchasing a new hearing device will automatically include a manufacturer warranty (except if purchased online). Buying extra years of coverage at the time of purchase can save you hundreds of dollars down the road. All new hearing devices come with a repair warranty and often will include a L&D (loss and damage) warranty. It is always a good idea to extend the repair warranty at the time of purchase to allow for more years of repair coverage. If a repair is needed and you have no warranty coverage, it will cost hundreds of dollars. Just one basic repair outside of warranty coverage will cost more than the extra premiums. Repairs to hearing devices can be very expensive!

# Congratulations

on investing your time in your hearing health!  
Here are the next steps...



If ready, your next step to take when considering hearing devices is to schedule a free comprehensive professional hearing test by calling our offices. We have three convenient locations to better serve you. 512-667-6904 in San Marcos and 830-399-4195 in Seguin and Floresville. Please bring this report for additional savings! We encourage age you to visit our website before your visit to learn more about what to expect during your appointment.

[www.texanhearingcenter.com](http://www.texanhearingcenter.com)

## Here's what you should expect during the hearing evaluation and consultation:

1. Your hearing professional will complete a hearing history with you to better understand your daily lifestyle, hearing difficulty and communication needs.
2. You will then have a thorough physical evaluation of your ears to assess any possible hearing-related conditions. This may include excessive earwax build up, eardrum damage or any other concerns. Some hearing problems, like earwax buildup, can be resolved quickly and easily. A measurement of your middle ear function called tympanometry may be performed. This is a quick and painless test. Your hearing professional should always look for the simplest solution first.
3. There will be a comprehensive hearing evaluation, including pure tone testing, bone conduction testing, speech understanding and other specialized tests if needed.

4. Your hearing professional will then discuss the test results and explain the degree and nature of your hearing loss (including the results of the speech understanding testing). If hearing loss is diagnosed then hearing device options will be recommended and all questions will be answered.

We hope you have found this guide educational and beneficial in understanding hearing loss and what you need to know before making a decision to move forward with hearing correction.

If you are ready to schedule a free comprehensive hearing evaluation and one-on-one consultation, simply call Texan Renew Hearing Center at:

**512.667.6904 (San Marcos)**

**830.399.4195 (Seguin and Floresville)**

If you'd like more information, visit our website [www.texanhearingcenter.com](http://www.texanhearingcenter.com)

Texan Renew Hearing Center is independently family-owned and operated by Denise Kopecki and has three convenient locations in San Marcos, Seguin and Floresville. Visit our website for directions: [www.texanhearingcenter.com](http://www.texanhearingcenter.com)

***"The thing about hearing loss is that no one can see it.  
You simply can't look at a person and  
tell if they have a loss."***

***- Marion Ross***





*Family owned & operated*

## Denise Kopecki, BC-H.I.S. — Owner

Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist

Denise, a licensed Hearing Instrument Specialist, completed her studies through the International Institute for Hearing Instruments. She continued her studies becoming Nationally Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences. Denise is also certified in cerumen management. She is a member of the International Hearing Aid Society, American Academy of Audiology and the Texas Hearing Aid Association.

In addition to her expertise in device selection, programming and fittings, Denise specializes in the counseling of social and psychological effects of hearing loss for her clients, their families and loved ones.



## Professional Memberships

- Licensed Hearing Dispenser in Texas
  - International Hearing Society
  - National Board Certification
  - Texas Hearing Aid Association
- San Marcos Chamber of Commerce
  - Seguin Chamber of Commerce
  - Floresville Chamber of Commerce
  - Guadalupe County Senior Center



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** "A Hearing Device Is Less Conspicuous Than Your Hearing Loss" Hearing aids should help put you back in touch with your family, friends and social activities. It is important to remember that all hearing losses are different and the benefit you receive from your devices may be different from others. Personalized care by a hearing healthcare professionals is paramount to your hearing correction success!







## HERE'S WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT OUR OFFICE, OUR TEAM AND OUR SERVICES...

"Denise and staff are experts at helping those with hearing difficulties. I have had the pleasure of working with Denise professionally and find her to be one of the best! I highly recommend her for all your hearing healthcare needs!"

- **Renee E.**

"These guys are a great help to me. Highly recommended! I haven't shopped around, but I know that I couldn't get much better prices for the tech they provide, so why go anywhere else when you're getting the good stuff along with great service? Thanks Renew Hearing Center!"

- **Jonathan Epstein**

Texan Renew Hearing Center is exceptional in every way. I have been using them for the past seven years for my hearing needs and have found them to go above and beyond the call of duty. Superior hearing devices and exceptional hearing professionals. Denise is the most professional and compassionate person I have ever met. I will continue to use Renew Hearing for all of my hearing needs.

- **Mike Ullevig**

I have worn aids for many years before coming to Denise 5 years ago and never before have I had the level of care that Denise and Stephanie show me. You have a customer for life!

- **Bobby K.**

# FIVE FABULOUS FREE OFFERS

1

## FREE CONSULT & SCREENING

For your FREE CONSULTATION and FREE SCREENING, simply call our office for an appointment at 512-667-6904 (San Marcos) or 830-399-4195 (Seguin & Floresville) and mention this Special Report.

2

## FREE WAX INSPECTION

We also check for excess wax or obstruction of the ear canal. Sometimes a hearing loss can be the result of excess earwax. Simply give us a call and mention this Special Report to schedule your FREE wax inspection.

3

## FREE INSTRUMENT "CLEANING"

If you are currently wearing a hearing device(s) and would like to come in for a FREE INSTRUMENT "CLEANING" and free package of batteries, simply give us a call and mention this Special Report and we will gladly provide you with this service for FREE, a \$23.00 value.

4

## \$100 CREDIT

If you purchase a new hearing device, we'll give you a \$100 credit towards your new purchase. (\$200 for a new set). \*Some restrictions may apply.

5

## FREE TRIAL PERIOD

Plus, you may qualify for a free trial period of new devices at no risk to you.

## OFFICES ARE CONVENIENTLY LOCATED AT:

300 S. CM Allen Pkwy, #300A  
San Marcos, TX 78666

519 N. King St., Ste 104  
Seguin, Texas 78155

1301 Hospital Blvd.  
Floresville, TX 78114

\*Give this report to someone who can benefit from its information and earn referral dollars. Write your name on the front cover and we'll take care of the rest! Please call for specific referral program details. It pays to refer!