

FALL
2012

The Hearing Report

The Newsletter of Audiology Services, Inc 617-484-8700

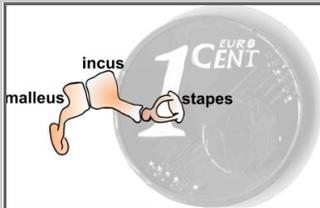
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BONE FACTS

The hardest bone in the body is the petrous part of the temporal bone, the part of the skull that protects the ear.

The smallest bones in the body are those in the middle ear transmitting sound that hits the eardrum to the inner ear. The "ossicular chain" consists of the malleus (hammer), incus (anvil) and the stapes (stirrup). These bones are also almost full grown at birth.



“ This hearing aid is a life changer. I can’t believe how much I missed because I delayed it so long. It’s really amazing.”

Stephen S.,
27 year old musician.

EXERCISE YOUR HEARING

A term called “brain plasticity” has been used in many different contexts lately.

There is much more public awareness about exercising not only the muscles of the body but also the brain using memory games and puzzles.

The ability of the brain to build new connections is responsible for children’s ability to learn at such a fast pace. Scientists are finding that the brain can reorganize itself in response to changes in the environment. For example, a person who is completely deaf may use part of their auditory brain for visual stimuli, and visually impaired persons may use part of their visual cortex to process auditory stimuli.

Comprehending an auditory signal involves all the pathways from both ears to the cortex to place meaning on a sound. Detecting a sound is only the first step. Loss of hearing often results in partial auditory deprivation potentially leading to processing problems.

It is known that as we age there is a tendency for the processing times to slow down.

Listening to rapid speech is a very common complaint that we hear in our office and one that hearing aids alone don’t fix.

Wearing amplification in both ears allows some of the connections to strengthen again but may not return to pre-hearing loss levels. Adults who are fit with hearing aids for the first time can show changes in auditory ability over time as a result of greater stimulation. This process, which was coined twenty years ago as “auditory acclimatization”, can take many months.

Auditory processing is one of the brain’s function that responds to “exercise”.

Just like exercising your body, exercising your hearing connections takes work. The more you stimulate your brain to hear, the stronger the connections are. There are formal programs available to maximize the training while listening to rapid speech, speech with competing noise, and taxing auditory memory. Talk to your audiologist if you are interested in trying one of these programs.

WATER RESISTANT HEARING AIDS

If you’ve ever panicked when jumping into the shower with your hearing aids you are not alone. Excessive moisture and perspiration can be a serious enemy of hearing aid electronics. The long term effect of exposure to moisture is corrosion of the electronic elements, which leads to component failure. Many manufacturers are now coating the internal components to ensure more protection to avoid this type of damage. Some of these instruments can even withstand being dunked into a glass of water without any failures!

Fall Update:

Many of you have seen or will see our audiology intern, Lauren Brum, during your appointments. She will spend a year in our office before she obtains her doctorate next May. Lauren has completed three years of graduate classes and several other off-site part time practicums, including one at the VA Hospital.

We were all able to attend the American Academy of Audiology annual convention held in March along with close to 8,000 other audiologists. This three day national meeting was held in Boston in the spring. Attending educational programs and manufacturer's exhibits help to keep us up to date with new technology and procedures.

In July, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law H.B.52 which mandates insurance coverage for children up to the age of 21. The benefit is set at \$2000.00 per ear every three years. Advocates had fought for eight years to see this legislation become a reality. It becomes effective January 1, 2013.

Hoping you all enjoy the fall.

Dr. Jean T. Rosowski, Au.D., CCC-A

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Audiologists

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF HEARING SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY