Exercise and Hearing Aids

If your New Year’s resolution is to get more exercise and stay active, hearing loss doesn’t mean you must give up the sports you love. Being physically active is good for the mind and body, no matter your age. Exercising while you wear hearing aids isn’t a problem. You just need to be prepared.

DON’T LET HEARING AIDS WORK UP A SWEAT. If you are going to be physically active, you are going to sweat. Even if you play winter sports, you know you sweat. But sweat is dangerous and damaging to your hearing aids, so here is how to protect them.

Wear a headband to absorb as much sweat as possible. Headbands do a good job of absorbing sweat before it reaches your hearing aids. There are even headbands made to fit over hearing aids. The Hearing Aid Sweatband fits directly over your behind-the-ear style hearing aid. These little hearing aid sweat bands are worn in addition to your regular sweatband and will protect your hearing aids from moisture and debris.

Use a dehumidifier box at night. This is well worth the investment if you play sports or are active outside. They are also great if you visit or are living in a humid environment. These boxes allow you to dry out the places in your hearing aids that you can’t reach with regular cleaning. Treat your high performance hearing aids to a little TLC each night. While you sleep, the dehumidifier will dry moisture and earwax.

TALK TO YOUR AUDIOLOGIST. If you enjoy sports such as skiing, hiking, swimming or water aerobics, ask your audiologist about hearing aid options that let the sound in and the elements out. Some manufacturers offer hearing aids that are virtually shock resistant and completely sealed to keep water out. Resistant to dust, perspiration and humidity, these hearing aids are perfect for people who spend time in demanding conditions. So wherever you are, whether it’s an vacation building sandcastles, hiking in the mountains, sweating at the gym, you can enjoy the sounds of life to the fullest.

Remember, it’s never too late to hear better and regular check-ups are important for maintaining your hearing health. For those of you who have been traveling this winter, make sure to schedule an appointment to have your hearing aids checked and cleaned when you get back in town. At Hearing Professionals of Illinois, we are “hear” for you and we look forward to seeing you soon!
If you are ignoring a hearing problem because you’re afraid that hearing aids might say the wrong thing about you, think again. Research shows that people with hearing loss who use hearing aids enjoy a better overall quality of life. Below are five things that treating hearing loss says about you:

1. YOU VALUE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS. Good communication is the foundation of healthy relationships. Treating hearing loss lets close family and friends know that you want to stay connected and involved in your relationships with them. Most hearing aid users say it not only helps their overall ability to communicate effectively in most situations, but it also has a positive effect on their relationships. Hearing aid users are more likely to have a strong social network and are less likely to feel isolated.

2. YOU LIKE TO BE ACTIVE. Why let hearing loss interfere with an active lifestyle? Treating hearing loss means you plan on keeping up the pace of a fulfilling life. Research shows that people with difficulty hearing, who use hearing aids, get more pleasure in doing things and are more likely to meet up with friends to socialize.

3. YOU LOVE LIVING LIFE. The more enthusiastic you are about life, the less likely you will let untreated hearing loss get in your way. When you wear hearing aids, you let the world know that you love living life and you’re going to live it without reservations. Research has found that people with hearing loss who use hearing aids are more likely to be optimistic and feel engaged in life.

4. YOU WANT TO STAY SHARP. A new long term study in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society has found that wearing hearing aids reduces the risk of cognitive decline that is associated with aging. The researchers found that cognitive decline is accelerated for those with hearing loss that don’t use hearing aids. Treating your hearing loss means that you want to do everything that you can to keep your mind active and sharp. Hearing all the sounds that life has to offer will help make that happen.

5. YOU ARE TECH-SAVVY. Today’s wireless hearing aids are cutting edge personal mini-computers. These sleek devices offer technology that enriches life and makes us more efficient. When you wear state-of-the-art hearing instruments, you are letting the world know that you are ready to reap all the rewards that modern technology has to offer.

If you are one of our many patients who have already made the decision to treat their hearing loss by wearing hearing aids, I want to commend you for having the self-assurance and willingness to deal with your hearing issues head-on. For those of you who are still on the fence, maybe this list will inspire you. Please know that when you are ready to take that next step, we are “hear” for you!

Keeping You in the Loop

Hearing loop systems provide clear sound, free from background noise, echo, or distortion which transmits directly into the majority of hearing aids. If you use a hearing aid, chances are you sometimes have problems hearing a speaker or other sound signal when in a noisy room, when auditorium or TV loudspeakers are far away, or when the room acoustics reverberate sound. Hearing loop systems are designed to solve such problems. Hearing loops, also called audio-induction loops or audio loops, are wires installed around the perimeter of a room, typically by the floor. Sounds from a microphone or a public-address system feed into an amplifier through an electric current, and the amplifier sends the current to the wire.

The current creates a magnetic field, and this magnetic signal is then picked up wirelessly, like an antenna, by a tiny copper telecoil (T-coil) receiver that is already built into most hearing aids and all new cochlear implants.

Relatively simple to set up, hearing-loop systems transmit sound directly to your hearing aid. They reduce the work your brain must do while trying to make out sounds, since the T-coil picks up sounds only from the amplifier, instead of also hearing all the sounds picked up by the hearing aid’s microphone. The result? Clear sound, free from background noise, echo or distortion.

You may already be familiar with T-coils because all landline and some cell phones are designed to be used with them. About two-thirds of hearing aids have T-coils. Keep in mind the newest, smallest hearing aids may not have T-coils, and some older, “automatic” T-coils are activated only by magnets in phone earpieces and won’t pick up room loops. Talk to your audiologist to determine whether your aid has a T-coil and how to use it with a room loop. If your aid doesn’t have a T-coil, you may be able to access a T-coil via a wireless streamer accessory.

Some hearing aids have a microphone as well as a T-coil setting. This allows you to hear via the loop system while still picking up ambient noise through your hearing aid’s microphone, such as if someone speaks to you or the phone rings. With some newer aids, your audiologist may be able to customize your T-coil settings to your preferred balance between T-coil input and ambient sound.

Hearing loop use is effortless and directly hearing aid-compatible, with no need to locate, check out, and return special equipment like frequency modulation (FM) and infrared wireless systems that transmit signals to receivers with earphones. The sound you hear is customized because you hear it through your own hearing aid, already optimized to your hearing.

Hearing loop use is straightforward and is especially useful when there is background noise or in noisy environments. The technology is easy to install, but more and more system installations are occurring every year, thanks to dedicated individuals and organizations throughout the country. In our area, looped venues include the Lincolnshire Marriott Theater, Steppenwolf Theater, Drury Lane and many places of worship.

Hearing loops are great assistive devices for those with hearing loss. Just push the button to get you to your T-coil mode and presto, you have Wi-Fi for your ears. When installed correctly, hearing loops bring wonderfully clear, crisp sound while eliminating background noise.

For online hearing loop resources, including locations, go to hhf.org/loops or ask your Hearing Professionals audiologist for our list of local looped venues.

Information Courtesy of Hearing Health Foundation 2015

Check out www.hearillinois.com to take a FREE, quick, and confidential online hearing survey to determine if you need a comprehensive hearing test by one of our wonderful Audiologists. You can find the survey under the Hearing Resources tab. Let us be the first to congratulate you on your motivation and determination. You can take the first step on the road to better hearing and to securing a better quality of life for yourself in 2016.

Join Our Club! Ask your Audiologist for a FREE Battery Club Card to receive savings on your hearing aid batteries. Purchase 6 packages of Hearing Aid Batteries and receive ONE FREE!