

## Hearing Education: An Important Step On Your Path to Better Hearing

We encourage all of our patients to attend our complimentary one-hour hearing health care education program. This program is helpful for patients with minimal hearing loss who are not yet experiencing a noticeable breakdown in communication. It is also beneficial for patients with more significant hearing loss who may be candidates for hearing aid use.

We strongly recommend attending with members of your household. We will provide comprehensive, practical information to improve hearing in those with hearing loss. You and your family will learn strategies to decrease the effort required to communicate successfully and avoid the frustration that is commonly a result of hearing loss.

Call us today at (847) 674-5585 to reserve your seat at an upcoming education program.

*We strongly recommend  
attending with members of  
your household.*



### Did you know?

February is American Heart Month!

Along with celebrating Valentine's Day, February is a great time to commit to a healthy lifestyle and make small changes that can lead to a lifetime of heart health. Heart disease is the number one illness in the U.S., causing one in four deaths each day.

Read the articles in this newsletter to learn about the correlation between healthy foods, cardiovascular health and your hearing.

**For more information,  
contact our office at  
(847) 674-5585.**



## HEART HEALTH and Your Hearing

### February is American Heart Month!

What exactly does this have to do with your ears? The inner ear is extremely sensitive to blood flow and studies have shown that a healthy cardiovascular system can have a positive effect on hearing. A study conducted by Harvard University cited a strong relationship between heart disease and hearing loss finding "hearing loss occurred 54% more often in people with heart disease than in the general population".

The inner ear depends on a rich supply of blood for proper function and longevity. The anterior inferior cochlear artery supplies key sensory areas of the inner ear with blood flow. If the blood flow is inadequate, interrupted, or the vessels suffer a trauma, the result can be damage to the inner ear nerves, impacting a person's ability to hear. In fact, the nerves in the inner ear are so fragile that Harvard researchers believe that hearing loss may be one of the earliest indicators of heart disease.

Maintenance of good cardiovascular health is beneficial for overall health, but crucial for protection of hearing function. If we care about our hearing and the quality of life we enjoy, it pays to take care of our general health, and especially our cardiovascular system.

A hearing check should be part of everyone's regular physical exam. If you already suspect that hearing loss may be affecting your day-to-day activities, schedule a thorough hearing evaluation. At Hearing Professionals of Illinois, we can evaluate your hearing health and, if there is a need, work with you and offer suggestions for a hearing solution.

The clear link between hearing health and heart health is a powerful reminder that Hearing Care is HealthCare.





# EAT WELL FOR HEALTHY HEARING



# HAPPINESS FROM HEARING AIDS



**You've probably heard the phrase "you are what you eat." While that may not be entirely true, the foods you consume can have a positive effect on your hearing. Studies indicate foods rich in certain nutrients can help boost your hearing. In some cases, they may even help delay or prevent hearing loss.**

**Omega-3 fatty acids**, typically found in fish such as salmon, tuna and sardines, contain anti-inflammatory properties that help strengthen the blood vessels in the inner ear, helping protect against hearing loss. Research shows that individuals who eat two or more servings of fish a week are 42 percent less likely to develop age-related hearing loss compared to those who do not eat fish regularly.

**Vitamin B12** creates new red blood cells and improves the flow of blood to the ears. Foods high in B12 include lean meats, dairy and eggs. Clams, liver and fish are especially high in this nutrient. **Vitamin D** keeps the bones and tissue in the inner ear healthy, preventing bone loss and otosclerosis; good sources are fish and milk. **Vitamins A & E**, found in carrots, spinach, kale, Swiss chard and mustard greens contribute to good heart health, which is linked with hearing health as well.

**Antioxidants** are another excellent source of protection from hearing loss, particularly **folic acid**. They help reduce the number of damage-causing free radicals in your body and ultimately help prevent hearing loss. Good sources of folic acid include leafy greens such as spinach and romaine lettuce, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, black beans and nuts. Persons over the age of 50 with a folate deficiency have a 35 percent higher risk of hearing loss.

A study conducted by the University of Sydney in Australia looked at the antioxidant content of the diets of 3,000 participants during the past five years.

**The results showed that subjects who had the highest intake of vitamin A had a 50 percent risk reduction for moderate or severe hearing loss.**

The subjects in the study with the highest level of vitamin E content showed a 15 percent reduction in risk of hearing damage.

According to the researchers, diet is one of the few modifiable risk factors for age-related hearing loss. The authors' goal was to examine the link between dietary and supplement intakes of antioxidants as well as both the prevalence and five-year incidence of measured hearing loss. *The study proved antioxidants reduce the risk for damage, thus protecting the sense of sound.*

While there's no guarantee that consuming these foods will keep you from developing hearing loss, including them as part of your diet will help improve your overall health.

Many scientific studies in the past have confirmed the positive impacts associated with hearing solutions. Studies have supplied overwhelming data about how much of a difference hearing devices can make in overall mood and happiness. These results demonstrate the benefits patients with hearing loss experience.



\*MarkeTrak VIII Patients report improved quality of life with hearing aid usage By Sergei Kochkin, PhD  
\*\* EVALUATION OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF HEARING IMPAIRMENT A REPORT FOR HEAR-IT



## Ask the Audiologist

**Q:** Is it true that you shouldn't use Q-tips or cotton swabs to clean your ears?

**A:** It is true. The purpose of earwax, medically known as cerumen, is to lubricate your ears and keep dust and dirt away from the eardrum. When you use a cotton swab to clean your ears, you are actually pushing the earwax deeper into your ear which can cause hearing loss, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), infections and possibly a ruptured eardrum if it is pushed in too far. If you start to notice fullness in your ears, a decrease in hearing or feedback when wearing hearing aids, you may have a buildup of earwax. **Q-tips and over-the-counter remedies can be harmful or ineffective.** We recommend having the cerumen removed by an ENT physician on a regular basis.

Still have questions?

Contact your audiologist at Hearing Professionals of Illinois (847) 674-5585.