

Should I See an Audiologist?

au·di·ol·o·gist—Audiologists are health-care professionals who provide patient-centered care in the prevention, identification, diagnosis, and evidence-based treatment of hearing, balance, tinnitus, and other hearing disorders for people of all ages.

Please read the list of questions below, and check YES or NO. If you answer YES to one or more of these questions, make an appointment to see an audiologist.

Health and Wellness

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have ear pain? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Are you worried about an earwax blockage? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have noises in your ears (such as ringing, buzzing, clicking, or humming)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have dizziness or trouble with balance? |

Television and Telephone

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do your friends and family tell you that your TV is too loud? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have trouble hearing your favorite show but can hear commercials easily? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have a problem hearing on the telephone? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you hear better in one ear than the other? |

Communication and Relationships

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have trouble hearing in restaurants or large groups? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you ask people to repeat themselves? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you respond inappropriately in conversation? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do family members or coworkers say that you misunderstand what they said? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do many people you talk to seem to mumble (or not speak clearly)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do you have trouble understanding women and children? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | Do people get upset because you don't hear what they say? |

It can seem overwhelming to go to an audiologist for the first time. You may have a lot of questions. Your audiologist may also have questions for you about your life and medical history. It is important to not put off seeing an audiologist if you are experiencing hearing difficulties. Use this list to help guide you before, during, and after your visit.

Before Your Visit

- Check with your insurance plan to find out about your coverage and who pays. Some plans make you get a doctor's referral to see the audiologist.
- Bring a list of your medications, both prescription and over the counter. Some medicines may affect hearing and balance.
- Bring information about your medical history. Examples may include past surgeries, current and past medical problems, and symptoms you're experiencing.
- Write down questions to ask the audiologist.
- Bring a family member or friend with you. It is helpful to have someone there with you to help remember what the audiologist said.
- Call the office ahead of time if you need an interpreter during your visit.

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During Your Visit

- Use the “Ask Me 3” questions:
 - What is my main problem?
 - What do I need to do?
 - Why is it important for me to do this?
- Ask the questions you wrote down to prepare for your visit.
- Your audiologist may make recommendations to help your hearing. Listen to the suggestions and be ready to ask questions.
- Write down recommendations or ask your family member or friend to take notes.
- Tell the audiologist what you think they said to make sure you understood.
- Get a phone number and email address for the audiologist in case you have questions after you leave.
- At the end of your visit, ask the audiologist about scheduling your next hearing evaluation. Make sure you get your hearing checked regularly so you can monitor it over time.

After Your Visit

- Go over your notes. Check your loved one’s notes to see if you both heard the same thing.
- Call or email your audiologist if you have other questions.
- Ask your audiologist for recommendations on articles you can read in print or online about hearing loss. Not all online resources are accurate or created by hearing health professionals.
- If the audiologist recommends hearing aids, make a list of questions that you may want to ask before making a purchase. Hearing aids have many features to meet different needs. There may be other hearing assistive technologies to help you, too. Refer to the [Hearing Assistive Technology Systems](#) [PDF] patient handout for more information.
- Insurance plans may or may not cover hearing aids or assistive technology. Before buying hearing aids, check with your insurance and talk to your audiologist about available payment options, including what services are included.
- At your follow-up appointment with the audiologist, go over options, and ask any questions that you have.

Content contributed by ASHA member Sydney Nance, AuD, CCC-A.

Notes:

For more information and to view the entire Audiology Information Series library, visit www.asha.org/aud/pei/.

For more information about balance problems, preventing falls, hearing loss, hearing aids, or referral to an ASHA-certified audiologist, contact:



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

2200 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
800-638-8255

Email: audiology@asha.org
Website: www.asha.org

Compliments of

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
2200 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850 800-638-8255