

# Making the most of your hearing aid

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## Department of Audiology & Audiological Medicine

### Lanesborough Wing, St George's Hospital

This leaflet is for people wearing one or two hearing aid(s). It provides a few practical ideas for how you can get used to your hearing aid so that you can get benefit from it.

Firstly, be patient – you are hearing sounds through a device so you need to get used to it, especially in difficult hearing situations.

#### **Practice every day**

In the beginning, wear your hearing aid for only a few hours each day. Gradually increase how long you wear the hearing aid(s) so you can start to feel more comfortable and more confident with them.

There are probably quite a few sounds you haven't heard for a while. The hearing aid is going to bring a lot of these back and while it can be an exciting time, it also takes time to get used to the background noise of everyday life again. Clocks tick. Shoes make a noise on the floor. People tapping away on a keyboard can be annoying! Try the following exercises to help you get used to your hearing aid and to make the most of it.

#### **Exercise 1: Listen to sounds around you**

Walk around your home and make noise – open and close drawers, listen to the teaspoon as you stir your tea, ring the doorbell and listen to that. Loud sounds should be loud and soft sounds should be soft. Try to identify what the sounds are without looking at them.

#### **Exercise 2: Have a conversation with one person**

Start with listening to one other person when there is no background noise. You should find that conversation is easier with the hearing aid in but don't expect to hear someone who is far away or in another room.

#### **Exercise 3: Have a conversation with two or more people**

Now try a conversation with more than one person. This is much more difficult than the previous exercise, isn't it? The hearing aid is going to be picking up all speakers at the same time! You need to try to reduce background noise as much as possible and make sure you can see the people you are talking to. Face the person you are talking to and ask them to speak slowly and clearly (not loudly).

#### **Exercise 4: Learn to focus your hearing**

Practice focusing on sounds you want to hear and ignore unwanted sounds. Try to identify familiar and unfamiliar sounds in your environment. Listen to music but try to focus on just one part (e.g. the drums or the vocals). Soon you will be able to focus your attention from one sound to another.

**If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet, you can contact:**

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