

Treat Hearing Loss to Preserve Cognitive Health

Cognitive impairment is commonly associated with aging, adverse drug effects and dementia.

However, the latest research on neurological disorders show a strong linkage to hearing loss. When the brain is not stimulated by the natural sounds of life and speech of others, brain function declines. In fact, adults with hearing loss:

- Suffer cognitive impairment 3.2 years sooner than those with normal hearing.
- Experience a 30%-40% greater decline in cognitive abilities.
- Are dramatically more likely to develop dementia. With mild hearing loss, up to 200%; if severe, they are up to 500% more likely to develop dementia.

Optimal hearing is vital for long-term health. Hearing affects social engagement, physical balance, cognitive abilities and overall quality-of-life. Ask your patient and their caregiver about their hearing.

If you suspect hearing loss, even with the use of hearing aids, it is imperative to refer your patient to a licensed audiologist, not a hearing aid dealer. Audiologists have eight years of academic and clinical training. Audiologists, committed to the gold standard of care, conduct exams in a sound booth and use Real Ear Measures and Loudness Mapping to match the hearing aid output to the exact hearing needs of the patient. The difference in care can define a patient's quality of life.

Sources: Frank Lin MD. [January 22, 2014 Hearing Loss Linked to Accelerated Brain Tissue Loss](#). Johns Hopkins Medicine News Release | Ha-Shen Li-Korotky, MD (2012). [Age-Related Hearing Loss: Quality of Care for Quality of Life](#). The Gerontologist. Vol 52, Issue 2 265-271 | National Counsel on Aging Survey. [The Consequences of Untreated Hearing Loss in Older Adults](#).

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