**Baby It’s Cold Outside... Can This Impact Hearing Health?**

Seasonal changes can influence many areas of our health. Effects of colder temperatures can have impacts on our hearing health and earwax consistency. Our area has recently been experiencing some cold temperatures, here are some recommendations we have regarding this topic!

**What are the Impacts of cold weather on hearing acuity?**

* Cold weather can reduce blood flow to areas of the body, including the auditory system
* Possible increased risk of ear infections which can influence hearing acuity
* Potential increase in earwax buildup which can influence hearing acuity

**Tips:**

* Keep the ears warm when spending time outside in cold temperatures
* Practice safe earwax removal practices, such as over-the-counter wax softening drops
* Maintain routine visits to your audiologist for hearing aid cleanings and maintenance

**What about sudden changes in hearing acuity? Can this be related to the weather?**

* Although research on this topic is limited, two studies cited below indicate that cold weather changes did not have a statistically significant effect on the rate of sudden sensorineural hearing loss
* Changes in earwax consistency or buildup of earwax can impact hearing acuity, but will likely improve once the wax has been successfully removed by an audiologist or ENT physician
* Sudden sensorineural hearing loss requires immediate medical intervention

**Our Takeaway:**

Some fluctuations in hearing health and earwax consistency are normal in the colder months. However, if a patient experiences a sudden hearing loss, this is cause for concern. The patient should be referred to an ENT physician immediately if this should occur.

**Have a patient who is concerned about their hearing or feels that they have had non-sudden changes in the colder months? Send them our way! We provide comprehensive hearing evaluations and other services.**

Danielides, Vasilis, et al. "Weather conditions and sudden sensorineural hearing loss." *BMC Ear, Nose and Throat Disorders* 2 (2002): 1-8.

Lin, Herng-Ching, et al. "The effects of weather on the incidence of sudden sensorineural hearing loss: a 5-year population-based study." *Audiology and Neurotology* 11.3 (2006): 165-171.