

The importance of professional hearing care

Question: Which hearing aid delivers the highest consumer satisfaction?

Answer: The hearing aid that comes with the services of a qualified hearing health care professional.

This is the conclusion of a study conducted by the nonprofit Better Hearing Institute. In fact, the study indicates that the services provided by a qualified hearing health care professional are just as important — if not more important — to wearer satisfaction as the hearing aids themselves.

In an article which summarizes the study findings, the authors identify a “common sense” process for fitting hearing aids, including these services:

- Physically inspect the ears and review the person’s history
- Accurately measure the person’s hearing loss
- Select the correct technology and options for the patient
- Perform a quality control assessment of the hearing aids
- Conduct an in-the-ear verification of hearing aid performance
- Fine tune the hearing aid settings to match the individual’s needs
- Validate the performance of the hearing aids in everyday life
- Provide counseling and rehabilitation services

Today, you can buy hearing aids in a lot of different ways — even over the Internet.

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Seven surprising facts about hearing aids

Nearly 35 Americans have a hearing loss. While the vast majority could be helped by hearing aids, many do not seek the help that is so readily available.

One of the biggest obstacles: erroneous and outdated notions about hearing aids.

HearPO wants you to know the true story — and some facts that just might surprise you — about today’s sophisticated hearing aids and hearing aid features.

FACT #1: Millions wear hearing aids without giving away their “little secret.”

As with other modern electronic devices, hearing aids come with increasingly miniaturized components. Because of this, hearing aids can be built tinier than ever — providing a discreet fit without sacrificing many popular features and options. The very smallest are mini-CIC (completely-in-the-canal) hearing aids, which fit virtually out of sight.

FACT #2: Hearing aid sound quality has progressed remarkably.

Digital signal processing (DSP) and technology features have revolutionized the hearing aid listening experience, especially when compared with older “analog” hearing aids. Voices sound more natural, music comes through more true to life, and overall sound quality is richer and clearer than ever before.

FACT #3: Hearing aids can provide help where you need it most.

For most people, hearing loss occurs in certain sound frequency regions more than in others. It is common to experience more hearing loss in the higher frequencies of sound than in the lower frequencies. Hearing aids can be programmed and customized to provide benefits in the areas where help is needed most.

FACT #4: Hearing aids can help you hear conversation easier in noisy environments.

In the past, one of the biggest complaints among hearing aid wearers was that they couldn’t hear conversation in noisy environments. This is no longer the case with many of today’s advanced hearing aids. Digital noise reduction, directional microphones and other innovative technologies allow wearers to focus more easily on what their companions are saying with less interference from background noise.

FACT #5: Hearing aids have become “smart” devices.

Many of today’s hearing aids can do much more than just amplify sounds — much like “smart phones” are used for more than just making phone calls. For example, with built-in wireless technology, audio from a cell phone or iPod can be streamed directly into the hearing aids, which become, in effect, stereo headsets.

FACT #6: Most hearing aids are customized to the individual.

“One size fits all” certainly does not apply to hearing aids. The majority of hearing aids are custom fit to each wearer’s ears and hearing loss, ensuring maximum comfort and performance.

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Simply Call **1-877-4-HEARPO (443-2776)** to learn more about the hearing program and to make your appointment.

Your Sounds, Your Life

HearPO[®]

Hearing Benefits Made Simple™

The question is, how will you get the services that are so crucial to consumer satisfaction?

Your best pathway to success with hearing aids: Seek the services of a qualified hearing health care professional. HearPO providers have completed a comprehensive credentialing process, assuring you of service excellence. To access your HearPO benefit, call 1-877-4-HEARPO (443-2776).

HearPO sponsors presentation at American Diabetes Association Scientific Conference

In recent years, researchers have identified a correlation between diabetes and hearing loss. Now, a new study conducted by Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit found that women between the ages of 60 and 75 with well-controlled diabetes have better hearing than women in the same age group who have poorly controlled diabetes.

HearPO is sponsoring a presentation on the diabetes-hearing loss connection, including discussion of the Henry Ford Hospital study, during the American Diabetes Association's 72nd Scientific Sessions, June 11, 2012, in Philadelphia.

Kathleen Yaremchuk, M.D., the hospital's Chair of Otolaryngology will present this session.

HearPO is a national strategic partner of the American Diabetes Association.

FACT #7: Hearing aids perform well in many different surroundings.

Many hearing aids come with multiple "memories" — preset programs that enable optimal listening in a variety of environments. For example, a hearing aid might have three memories: one for quiet, one for noise and one for talking on the phone. Some hearing aids can even adjust automatically to each situation, eliminating the need to push buttons or flip a switch.

The proof is in the listening experience

Of course, the real-life experiences of hearing aid wearers provide the most revealing story of how far hearing aids have come and their effectiveness in everyday life.

Each year, HearPO surveys people who received hearing aids and services from HearPO providers. In the most recent survey, more than 90% of the respondents said they were satisfied with their hearing aids, with the process of receiving their hearing aids and with the service they received from HearPO.

One major contributing factor is that HearPO providers enjoy access to hearing aids from several leading manufacturers. If you have a hearing loss, a HearPO provider can evaluate your situation and help you determine which hearing aids and features are right for you. Call 1-877-4-HEARPO (443-2776) to schedule an appointment.

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