

Did you know that hearing loss is the #1 physical disability in America?

Approximately 15 million Americans are affected by a hearing loss in some form.

Some types of hearing loss are preventable by healthy hearing behaviors and awareness of hearing damage risks. Other types may be improved medically, while some types cannot.

Permanent hearing loss often requires rehabilitation in the form of hearing aids and devices, counseling, or specialized training in listening techniques.

If you wonder whether you may have a hearing loss, or you know someone that does, this pamphlet is for you.

Why the Lions Help

The Lions of Illinois Foundation is a nonprofit organization with members throughout the state of Illinois. Since 1925, the Lions have taken the challenge given to them by Helen Keller. Addressing the Lions at their convention she urged them to become:

“Knights of the Blind in the Crusade Against Blindness.”



Scan here to learn more about LIF.

Questions?
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Lions of Illinois Foundation

Serving People with Vision and Hearing Needs Since 1974.

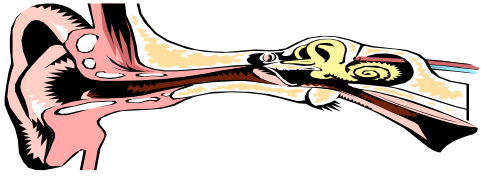
Hearing Loss Screening Services



1 in 5 Americans have a hearing loss. Learn what you can do to protect your hearing.

#HL-01

How We Hear



There are three different parts to the ear: outer, middle, and inner.

Normal hearing occurs when sound waves enter the ear canal and set the ear drum into vibration. Three tiny bones in the **middle ear**, the malleus, the incus, and the stapes, link the eardrum to the **inner ear**. These bones vibrate in conjunction with the vibration in the eardrum. This mechanical energy received at the **inner ear** (cochlea) is changed into electrical energy by thousands of tiny hair cells. The electrical energy generated by these cells excites the auditory nerve, which in turn, sends the signals to the brain.

There are 3 general types of hearing problems that interfere with this normal process:

1. Conductive hearing loss occurs when structures in the **outer or middle ear** cannot adequately conduct sound vibrations to the **inner ear**. Problems in this area can often be helped with prompt medical attention. They can include (but are not limited to) excessive wax, ruptured eardrum, fluid in the **middle ear**, and dysfunction of the bones of the **middle ear**.

2. Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when the **inner ear** does not properly process sound vibrations. It can result from head injury, severe infection, noise trauma, aging, and a number of other factors.

3. Mixed hearing loss is a combination of both a conductive loss and a sensorineural loss.

Hearing Loss Affects Everyone

CHILDREN: Ear infections are the second most common ailment to which children are susceptible. Most children are not aware of the problem and therefore intervention can be difficult at times. Children may exhibit the following symptoms:

- drainage from the ear
- difficult hearing
- short attention span
- difficulty getting their attention
- delays in speech development

Have your child's hearing tested, if you notice any of these problems. This can be done free of charge through the public schools and the local health department for preschool children. University clinics, hospitals, and sometimes ear, nose, and throat doctors also offer these services.

ADULTS: Hearing loss in adults may result from a number of conditions including, viral infections, certain medications, fixation of the stapes, and exposure to excessively loud noise. Notify your doctor, if you notice any changes in your hearing.

SENIOR CITIZENS: When sensorineural hearing loss is part of the aging process, it is referred to as presbycusis. Often the individual is unaware of the hearing loss or may not know how to obtain the proper help. Some signs to look for are:

- Frequent requests to have things repeated
- Playing the radio or TV at a louder than normal volume setting
- Straining to follow conversations
- Difficulty hearing in social situations, such as church, lectures, theatre
- Difficulty hearing on the telephone

Services Available

If you recognize any of these symptoms in someone you know, or suspect that you could have a hearing loss, there are services available.

- **Contact your family physician. Discuss your concerns and ask for advice on how you should proceed.**
- **Contact your local community hospital and see if they have a Speech & Hearing Clinic. Ask for an appointment for a hearing screening.**
- **Check your community calendar and newspaper for the local Lions Club sponsoring the Hearing Mobile Unit in your area.**

The hearing screening is not meant to be used in lieu of an examination by a clinical audiologist. Clinical audiologists are university trained (Masters Degree or Ph.D.) individuals who specialize in the evaluation and rehabilitation of hearing problems. They evaluate the type and degree of hearing loss present. If the hearing loss cannot be fixed by medical or surgical intervention, the audiologist provides information about hearing aids, assistive devices and other rehabilitative services.

The hearing screening test provided by your local Lions Club will only perform a basic hearing test to indicate if you have a hearing problem. Persons found to exhibit signs of a hearing loss are strongly encouraged to seek out the help of other trained professionals, such as their family doctor or an audiologist.

The Lions of Illinois Foundation's Mobile Hearing Screening Unit provides FREE hearing screenings to individuals age 10 and older.