

# Hearing loss?

## A word in your ear...



**You don't know what you're missing. The old cliché is never more pertinent than when it's applied to your hearing. More often than not, you don't realise what you're not hearing until someone points it out to you.**

Have relatives remarked that you tend to have the volume of your TV turned up very loud? Or did you miss that call from the kitchen asking if you take sugar? These could be the first telltale signs that your hearing has deteriorated. It might sound strange but hearing loss isn't as easy to spot as you may think. It can occur gradually so you don't realise it has happened as sounds initially become distorted rather than quieter.

The statistics are shocking. Over eight million people in the UK over the age of 55 would see their lives improve from having a hearing aid. Yet shockingly, less than half of this group – just two million people – actually wear one. Like our eyesight, our hearing can deteriorate due to age or other factors. We don't think twice about getting our eyes checked regularly, so why don't we take the same approach to our ears?

Hearing's a magical sense – imagine life without music, listening to your grandchildren giggling together or picking up the punch line of a joke in a crowded restaurant. Yet if the sense is even slightly impaired, it can result in misunderstanding, loss of confidence, a sense of isolation and a decline in audio pleasure. Life is too short to miss out on simple pleasures.

### What causes hearing loss?

Hearing loss can occur because of many different reasons, from conditions people are born with to hearing damage caused by prolonged exposure to loud noises. It's a problem typically associated with ageing - 40% of people over the age of 50 having some degree of hearing loss - but new research by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) shows that half of 16-34 year olds now suffer from hearing problems through listening to loud music.

### The solution

On average, 15 years typically passes between the

onset of hearing loss and the moment when people first seek help. So could you be one of the missing millions? You might be able to significantly improve your quality of life by arranging a hearing assessment with a hearing aid audiologist.

### Latest digital technology

The latest digital hearing aids are amazingly advanced – and many are hardly noticeable, whether located inside or behind the ear. The hearing aids now available are more cosmetic, affordable and technically advanced than at any other time. With a tiny computer inside to process sounds, these sophisticated new aids can be customized to suit your hearing loss precisely. And they can even be programmed for different surroundings, for example - a quiet living room, a concert hall, meeting or restaurant.

It's quick and easy to get an advanced hearing aid - so why not improve the quality of your life and of those closest to you, by taking action now to get your hearing tested.

There are more than 185 David Ormerod Hearing Centres around the UK. Telephone 0845 270 0999 to book a free no obligation assessment of your hearing.

### Thought for the Day

What if every child learnt sign language at School? I often wondered if by learning sign language could we enhance peoples lives as well as our own? My school was next to a school for deaf children and we were given the chance to learn the alphabet in sign language, thirty years later I still remember the alphabet. If all children learnt this as a language, not only could we use it to communicate with other children and adults with hearing difficulties but we could use it in clubs and concerts, rather than shouting into each others ears and as we grow older and start to lose our hearing could still communicate with friends and family without feeling isolated.