

The Importance Of Having An Audiogram Done

By Ruth Terry

Frequently, people come into my office and say they can "hear" but they can't understand. The reason is usually because they are hearing the vowels but missing a lot of consonants. An audiogram, or Hearing Test measures the exact level of hearing across the frequencies from very low frequency sounds, mostly vowels, to the high pitched or high frequency sounds, mostly consonants.

Most women's voices are high frequency as well as birds singing, telephones ringing, and a watch ticking. People who miss hearing consonants may not be able to distinguish between fifteen and sixteen. Or between the words on and off. Or between Ace, Ache and Ate.

An audiogram or hearing test is most efficiently done in an enclosed Sound Proof Booth where the levels of hearing can be measured without any interference from outside noises like traffic, air conditioners, trains going by, other people and so on. My sound proof booth is very large and comfortable like a walk-in closet.

The current Digital hearing aids are fit to the patients comfort

level, consequently, it is important to know what that level is. Digital hearing aids do not make everything sound "loud" like the old fashioned aids used to. Now, the aid wearer can hear sounds, especially speech sounds, at a comfortable, more normal level. So it is important to have an accurate measurement of your hearing.

Before an audiogram is done, your ears must be inspected to make sure they are not full of wax. Ear wax, or Cerumen, is normal in the ear and is your protection against infection, dryness and itching, bugs and water. But if it becomes impacted and closes up the canal, it can definitely affect your hearing. In some cases it needs to be cleaned out by a physician, in other cases your hearing aid specialist or your family doctor can remove it. If the ear is totally clogged up with wax the hearing test can show a hearing loss that can be corrected or at least improved by the removal of the impacted earwax.

It is also important to have a comprehensive hearing test. Comprehensive means the test includes Air Conduction testing, Bone Conduction testing, Speech Reception Threshold and Discrimination or

understanding speech tests. The main reason all these tests are important is that they can indicate if the patient needs to be referred to an Ear Nose and Throat Specialist for further testing or clearance to be fit with hearing aids.

A comprehensive test can indicate the possible presence of a tumor in the Internal Auditory Canal; or the presence of Otosclerosis, a disease of the ear in which the ear bones do not move and which can be corrected with surgery in most cases or other problems that need to be attended to by a physician either instead of being fit with hearing aids or before being fit with hearing aids. If only air testing is done, many of these problems can be missed.

Audiograms are easy, not uncomfortable and take only about 20 to 30 minutes. After the test is run you will be shown the test and I go over it with you showing you the difference if any between the left and right ears, the difference between the air conduction and the bone conduction and the results of the discrimination and speech reception threshold tests as well as the level of hearing.

The audiogram is then put

into the computer. The computer computes the original fitting which we then can adjust as needed. This also helps us narrow down your choices of what hearing aids will fit your hearing loss. If the patient is referred to a physician, they will be given a copy of the test to take with them.

With digital hearing aids in general, and GN ReSound aids specifically, because they are both programmable on the computer and because updates and upgrades to the software can put improvements into your hearing aid, repeating the hearing test on a regular basis allows us to reprogram your hearing aid to changes in your hearing. Upgrades and updates can be put in as they come along, but

changing the program can be done about once a year or as indicated by a fresh audiogram.

So in conclusion, there are many reasons to have a complete, comprehensive hearing test done in a sound proof booth, and I have mentioned a few of them. I have been doing Audiograms for 35 years. I have been fitting hearing aids for 34 years, and have been associated with GN ReSound for 16 years and I am qualified to fit Digital aids and Open aids as well as the just introduced rechargeable Pulse hearing aids. Y'all come see me now, y'hear?

I work by appointment so folks don't have to wait. My numbers are 979-732-5791 and toll free: 800-445-5062. (See my ad on this page)

Did You Know?

Warm muscles and tendons are less prone to injury and can improve physical performance.

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, warming up should always start off with a light exercise, like walking, that slightly increases your heart rate.

Then stretch your muscles to avoid injury. Finally, do a specific warm-up for five to 10 minutes that is related to your workout.

For instance, if your workout will focus on weightlifting, lift some light weights first before beginning your workout.

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