



## Tips for Finding the Perfect Hearing Aid

Hearing loss affects an increasing number of seniors, making it not only hard to hear but to enjoy life overall. According to the [National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders](#) (NIDCD), out of seniors ages 65 through 74, approximately one in three are dealing with hearing loss. The article also states that half of those over age 75 have difficulty hearing. Hearing loss is a reality that many seniors face and can have a profound impact on their lives. Many seniors begin to feel embarrassed about their hearing loss and frustrated as a result of not being able to hear as clearly as they once did. When seniors begin to feel restricted and limited by their hearing loss or begin to feel depressed and isolate themselves because of embarrassment, it's time to take action and fight back against this symptom of aging.

There are many hearing aid options that seniors can benefit from, each with different features and benefits. Some of these options include:

- **Electronic Aids.** These are the most used way to help seniors with hearing loss. They are used to make sounds louder so that seniors have an easier time hearing. Electronic aids come in a multitude of styles to provide seniors with many options. These include behind the ear, in the ear, and in the canal aids. Each of these forms are worn differently and serve different purposes. For example, those worn behind the ear are for mild to profound hearing loss, while those worn in the ear are for mild to severe hearing loss. Hearing aids that are worn inside the canal are used for hearing impairments ranging from mild to moderately severe. These are not recommended for those with severe hearing loss because they have a smaller battery and as a result are not able to work as long as other electronic aids.
- **Hearing Implants.** Also known as cochlear implants, these aids assist hearing loss through a small electronic device. Through surgery, the cochlear implants are placed within the inner ear to benefit seniors who have severe hearing loss or are deaf. Depending on the severity of a seniors' hearing loss, this may be an option for one or both ears, according to the NIDCD.
- **Bone Anchored Hearing Systems.** According to the NIDCD, bone anchored hearing aids "bypass the ear canal and middle ear." This type of hearing aid is specially designed to use the body's ability to transfer sound through bone vibration. The bone anchored hearing aid picks up and takes sound through vibrations and then relays the sound to seniors' inner ear.

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- **Non-Hearing Aid Options.** If seniors do not prefer to use another form of hearing aids, there are other options that can be considered. Try using assistive listening devices to amplify sound from phones, microphones or apps. These devices, according to the NIDCD, can help seniors to hear better in churches, theaters and auditoriums. It is also possible to try lip reading, although it is not entirely reliable. This can help seniors follow a conversation by following the movement of the mouth and body. Watching facial expressions can help to decipher meaning, however this can be difficult and misleading at times. It can help to become specially trained and taught in order to really benefit from lip reading.

Before committing to a hearing aid, seniors should visit an audiologist to determine which type will best benefit them. Your audiologist will help determine which type of hearing aid will be best and what features will be the most beneficial for your form of hearing loss. Be sure to ask your audiologist if you can try the devices before deciding on purchasing one, as they are not a one-size-fits all device. It is also important to know whether or not there is a warranty period for the hearing aid, what the warranty will cover and if a replacement will be available if any repairs are necessary in the future.

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