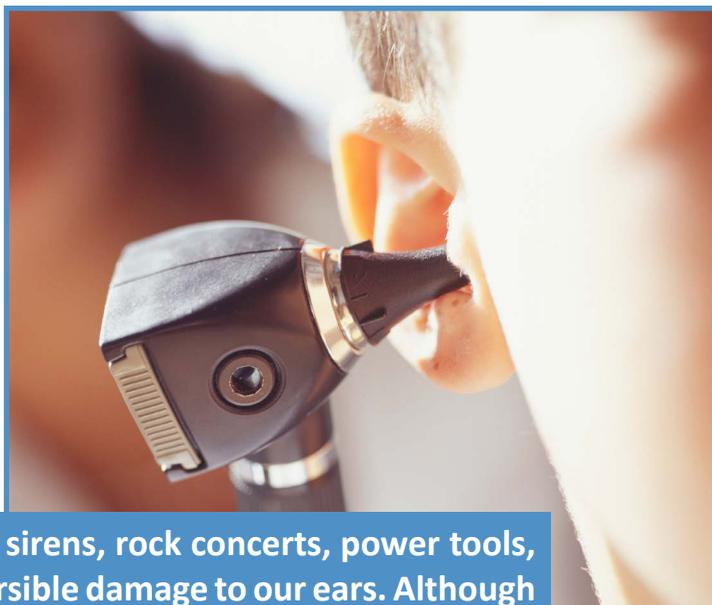


How to handle hearing loss



We live in a noisy world where police sirens, rock concerts, power tools, and other loud noises can cause irreversible damage to our ears. Although hearing loss is often a permanent condition, it can be managed.

Hearing loss is a common occurrence among older adults but, according to WebMD, it's also becoming more prevalent among middle-aged adults who grew up attending rock concerts and are regularly exposed to loud noises that have become a normal part of our everyday lives. In fact, noise is the cause of 50% of all cases of hearing loss, according to the South African National Deaf Association.

Living in a noisy world means that more people are likely to be diagnosed with hearing loss at an earlier age. That is why it's so important to protect your ears at all times.

You may also become hard of hearing if your parents have been diagnosed with a hearing impairment, as this condition is often hereditary.

When the first symptoms of hearing loss appear, people wait an average of seven years before they seek treatment, which can lead to social isolation, stigmatisation, and financial problems due to people avoiding opportunities that can lead to a better income.

Signs of hearing loss

- You have to strain to hear what others say and often misunderstand them.
- People have to repeat themselves often

when they are talking to you.

- You avoid social situations, meetings, or answering the phone because you can't clearly hear what other people say.
- People complain that the volume is too loud when you are watching television.
- You can't hear a thing when there is background noise, like in a noisy restaurant.
- Family members tell you to get your hearing checked.

Accepting hearing loss

Hearing loss has a big impact on your life, and coming to grips with it can make you feel helpless, angry, and depressed. It's important to speak with loved ones or a therapist about your feelings and, if necessary, to seek treatment for your depression or anger. Denying the problem won't make it go away so, the sooner you face it, the sooner you can start to manage it to help you live a normal life.

Manage hearing loss

If you are experiencing hearing loss, book an appointment with an audiologist to test your hearing. There are options available that can improve your hearing including using a hearing aid and cochlear implants. Speak to your audiologist about the best options.