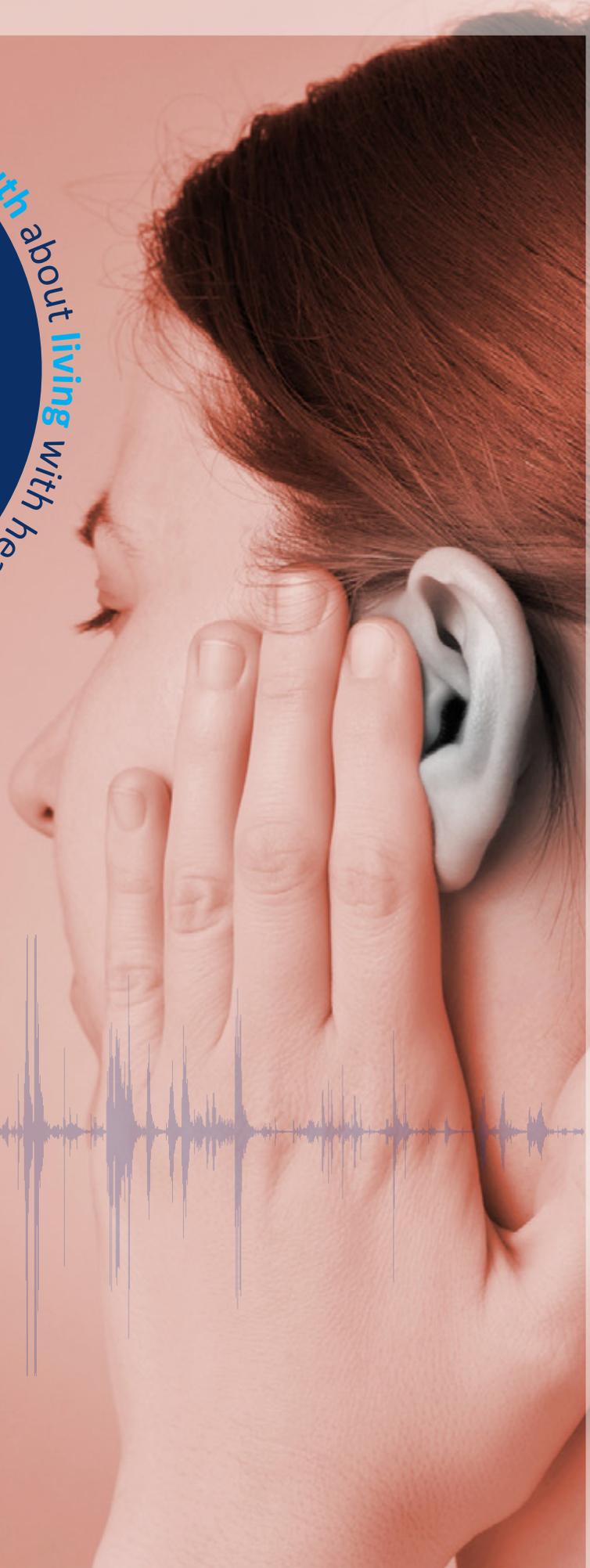


# LOST & FOUND

The truth about living with hearing loss





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The content of this ebook is intended for informational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose or treat any medical condition.

Nothing in this ebook is intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this ebook or on any website.



## INTRODUCTION

### **Do I have hearing loss? Do I need hearing aids? What options are available to me?**

All of these questions are common for people who have been noticing a change in their quality of life due to their hearing. Hearing loss is a very isolating experience both for the person affected and their loved ones. However, the answers to these questions are not as scary as anticipated. At Concept by IOWA Hearing Aid CENTERS®, our goal is to show you how better hearing will drastically improve the quality of your life and bring you and your loved ones back to enjoying daily activities the way you used to.

Concept By Iowa Hearing Aid Centers provides the people of Iowa with the very best in hearing healthcare services. Founded in 2001 by Iowa native Taylor Parker and his father-in-law Duane Flagel, Concept by Iowa Hearing Aid Centers has become a second home for anyone looking to find out about hearing loss and improve their hearing. Taylor and Duane are dedicated to this mission – in the last 8 years alone, Concept

has donated over \$300,000 worth of hearing aids to causes such as the Cedar Rapids Flood, and yearly at the Iowa State Fair – all in support of Iowans hearing better.

Powered by technology from Danish company GN ReSound, Concept hearing aids offer the highest quality sound, housed in a variety of sleek and modern models. Depending on your individual needs and preferences, Concept offers the best devices in the market with up-to-the-minute capabilities.

Outside of our ability to bring you the world's most advanced hearing technology, you will find that the Concept Experience is one of comfort, community, and connection. Hearing loss may leave you or a loved one with questions at any point in the coming months and years on your journey to regaining your ability to hear, and that's why Concept welcomes you into our family and never leaves you feeling isolated. Let this short read be our first gesture to welcome you to our family.



## RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

Although a hearing screening with audiogram is the only way to truly find out if you have a hearing loss, there are specific patterns and symptoms that may be telltale signs that your hearing has significantly deteriorated and you should seek professional help.

If you:

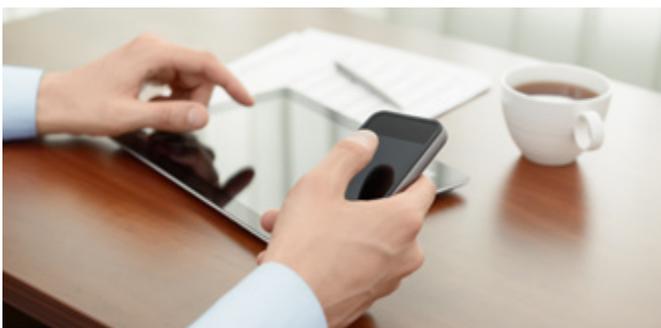
- have trouble hearing when someone talks in a whisper
- need to read people's lips while they talk in order to get a full understanding
- frequently ask people to repeat themselves

**“THERE ARE SPECIFIC PATTERNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT MAY BE TELLTALE SIGNS THAT YOUR HEARING HAS SIGNIFICANTLY DETERIORATED”**



- hear ringing or hissing sounds in your ears
- tend to miss noises that originate from behind you
- turn the TV or radio up loud enough that family or friends tell you to turn it down
- can't pick out the words people are saying when in a generally noisy environment, like a restaurant
- attend community events or religious services less frequently for fear of missing what's said

- avoid using the phone handset because the volume is too low
- miss hearing the deep tones and intricate notes of the music you used to enjoy
- feel isolated when in a crowd of people
- miss package deliveries because you didn't hear the door bell
- feel apprehensive when crossing a busy street
- sense an increase in tension or tempers of your immediate family members due to frequent misunderstandings
- like for people to talk slowly so you can discern what they say
- receive comments from others about your ability to hear



- ... you may have a hearing loss and should get a professional screening. You are not alone.
- Almost 50 million Americans have hearing loss in at least one ear, including 1 in 5 teenagers.
- 60% of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan come home with hearing loss and tinnitus; it is the #1 war wound.
- Depression and isolation are common among those with hearing loss.



- Those with a mild hearing loss are twice as likely to develop dementia, and this risk increases with the severity of the hearing loss.
- Over a six-year study, the cognitive abilities of older adults (ages 75 to 84) with hearing loss declined 30% to 40% faster than in older adults whose hearing was normal. On average, older adults with hearing loss developed a significant impairment in their cognitive abilities 3.2 years sooner than those with typical hearing
- Men are more likely than women to experience hearing loss.
- In the United States, three out of every 1,000 children are born deaf or hard-of-hearing.
- Hearing loss becomes more prevalent with age; hearing impairment occurs in about 18% of American adults between ages 45 and 54, 30% of adults between ages 65 and 74, and 47% of adults ages 75 and older.
- About 26 million Americans between the ages of 20 and 69 have high frequency hearing loss due to exposure to loud noises at work or in leisure activities.
- High levels of cotinine, the chemical that indicates exposure to tobacco smoke and second-hand smoke has been directly linked to higher risks of some types of hearing loss.



## MAKING LIFE EASIER

If you live with hearing loss, either personally with your family member or friend, making the adjustment can be tough. Here is a list of necessities for making the transition easier. Feel free to print this list out and hand them to anyone who might benefit from it.

### Be Patient

Remember that a person who is beginning to suffer hearing loss is like a child beginning to talk, listen and understand. All conditions of communication are changing. Hearing loss is worse for the afflicted person than for anyone else. Consider that you may also have to learn to live with your own hearing loss someday. Hearing loss is part of the natural aging process, be as sensitive as possible.

### Accept Reality

Hearing loss changes everyone's life and introduces new elements into both new and existing relationships. Hearing loss doesn't go away. Reconcile your friend or family member's hearing loss as you would the loss



of a child's arm. It doesn't change the essence of the person with the hearing loss - he or she is still the person you know and love.

### Speak Slowly

Many words sound like each other, especially if used in slurred or rushed speech. The person with hearing loss has to work much harder than they used to in order to discern

**“HEARING LOSS CHANGES EVERYONE’S LIFE AND INTRODUCES NEW ELEMENTS INTO BOTH NEW AND EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS.”**

what is being said. Consider what it's like for you when you listen to a newscaster on television who rushes through lines, especially when statistics are being quoted. Slow down and use clear speech.

### **Speak Using a Raised Conversational Voice**

If your loved one had bad vision, you would make their computer font larger so they could see more easily. The same adjustment should be made to your vocal volume, but not in excess. Don't shout or mumble - shouting doesn't help, and may give the impression that you are angry. Use clear speech. Careful enunciation is a useful habit to cultivate anyway.

### **Minimize Background Sound**

People with hearing loss find it hard to block out sounds while they are straining to hear your words. Listening while the television is on, when the washing machine or the dishwasher is running, or when someone in the room is carrying on an animated conversation on the telephone

**“PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS FIND IT HARD TO BLOCK OUT SOUNDS WHILE THEY ARE STRAINING TO HEAR YOUR WORDS”.**

can be difficult. Maybe your next family dinner happens at home, instead of at a loud restaurant.

### **Face The Person with Hearing Loss When Talking**

Don't talk with your back facing the person with hearing loss - even if someone can't read your lips accurately when you face them, they will get a better sense of what you are saying. Likewise, Don't start walking away while you are still talking - if you do this your words will come out as “i'm going to see if...” frustrating, isn't it!

### **Agree on a Signal**

People with hearing loss often cannot hear their own voices well enough to judge their loudness. They do not shout on purpose, nor should they feel embarrassed that they have been shouting. Together, come up with a signal that you can use to let the person with hearing loss know when he/she is talking too loudly -

### **Don't Show Annoyance**

Hearing loss is a huge adjustment. If you must repeat yourself, or if the person with hearing loss seems to have forgotten something said a few moments ago, keep that in mind. Repeat yourself; he or she probably did not hear you the first time.



## UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

### The risks of “coping” with poor hearing

Many people believe that they can live with their hearing loss, that it is only their problem and that seeking treatment would be an unnecessary luxury. These people not only struggle through daily life, but by failing to take action to improve their hearing health, they are actually putting themselves at more disadvantages than just missing a few comments here and there.

The reality is that by allowing hearing loss to go untreated, you may be putting yourself at risk for more serious problems. Whether it happens now or down the line, your challenges hearing can cause challenges with your brain function, safety, and socioeconomic status. Here are some studies to help you understand those risks.



**“BY ALLOWING HEARING LOSS TO GO UNTREATED, YOU MAY BE PUTTING YOURSELF AT RISK FOR MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS.”**



## A NEW TAKE ON RESEARCH: DEMENTIA AND HEARING LOSS

**New research from Johns Hopkins University – National Institute on Aging has found that seniors with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing.**

This research documents that the greater the degree of hearing loss, the greater the risk. Compared with volunteers with normal hearing, those with mild, moderate, and severe hearing loss had, respectively, a twofold, threefold, and fivefold risk of developing dementia over time. Specifically, the risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease also increased with diminishing hearing, with the authors noting that for every 10 dB decrement in hearing, the extra risk increased by 20 percent.

**“RESEARCH HAS FOUND THAT SENIORS WITH HEARING LOSS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP DEMENTIA OVER TIME”**

As their hearing loss further unfolds, the condition begins to trigger social isolation as well. Those with hearing loss often cease frequenting activities where their hearing is challenged. The lead author of the research, Frank R. Lin, MD, notes that hearing loss may be associated with cognitive decline through a causal pathway, possibly mediated by social isolation or cognitive load, or through a direct neuro-biologic mechanism. The effect of hearing loss on cognitive load is suggested by studies demonstrating that under conditions where auditory perception is difficult, i.e., hearing loss, greater cognitive resources are dedicated to auditory perceptual processing to the detriment of other cognitive processes such as working memory.

Linda S. Remensnyder, AuD; References: 1. Lin FR, Metter EJ, O’Brien RJ, Resnick SM, Zonderman AB, Ferrucci L. (2011) Hearing Loss and Incident Dementia. Arch Neurol 68(2):214–220. 2. Lin FR (2011) Hearing Loss and Cognition Among Older Adults in the United States. J Gerontol: A Biol Sci MEd Sci 66A(10):1131–1136.



## HEARING LOSS TRIPLES RISK FOR FALLING IN MIDDLE-AGED ADULTS AND ELDERLY

**A new study led by a Johns Hopkins researcher suggests that having hearing loss triples the risk of falls for people in their 40s and later. The findings are regardless of whether the hearing loss is moderate or severe.**

To determine whether hearing loss and falling are connected, Frank Lin, MD, PhD, at Johns Hopkins, and his colleague, Luigi Ferrucci, MD, PhD, of the National Institute on Aging, used data from the 2001 to 2004 cycles of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). During those years, 2,017 participants ages 40 to 69 had their hearing tested and answered questions about whether they

had fallen over the past year. Researchers also collected demographic information, including age, sex, and race, and tested participants' vestibular function.

Lin and Ferrucci found that people with mild (25 dB) hearing loss were nearly 3 times more likely to have a history of



falling. Every additional 10 dB of hearing loss increased the chances of falling by 1.4 fold. This finding still held true, even when researchers accounted for other factors linked with falling, including age, sex, race, cardiovascular disease, and vestibular function. Even excluding participants with moderate to severe hearing loss from the analysis didn't change the results.

Their findings and possible explanations are published in the February 28 Archives of Internal Medicine



## STUDY DEMONSTRATES FINANCIAL DANGERS OF UNTREATED HEARING LOSS

**People with untreated hearing loss could lose as much as \$30,000 of their annual income, according to a national study by the Better Hearing Institute (BHI). Researchers observed more than 40,000 households and found that use of hearing aids reduced the risk of income loss by 90 to 100 percent in those with milder hearing loss, and from 65 to 77 percent in those with severe to moderate hearing loss.**

The findings also showed that the loss in income for people with untreated hearing loss due to unemployment is estimated at \$176 billion and that there is a strong correlation between the degree of hearing loss and unemployment in those who do not use hearing aids. Those with severe hearing loss showed levels double that of normal hearing population and nearly double that of patients using hearing aids.

“The real tragedy in delaying hearing loss treatment is that when left unaddressed, hearing loss negatively affects individuals and their families for the rest of their lives



in the form of lost wages, lost promotions, lost opportunities, lost retirement income, and unrealized dreams,” said BHI executive director Sergei Kochkin, PhD.

“But when people with even mild hearing loss use hearing aids, they improve their job performance, increase their earning potential, enhance their communication skills, improve their professional and interpersonal relationships, stave off depression, and better their quality of life.”

Reference: Kochkin, S. The Impact of Untreated Hearing loss on Household Income. Better Hearing Institute, Alexandria VA. (May 2007).



## FINDING A SOLUTION

**After realizing you may have a hearing loss, you may not know how to take the next step. You may feel isolated by your situation and wary of making a mistake in choosing the right health care professional. You're not alone in your journey!**

Here are some vital details you should look for to help you choose who is worthy of examining your ears.

### **Professional qualifications of staff -**

Before you make an appointment with any location or particular doctor, do your research on the qualifications of their staff. As in most standard healthcare practices, ear care specialists and hearing aid dispensers must be licensed in order to serve patients. In the US, in order to become an "Audiologist", one must obtain a Masters or Ph.D in Audiology from an accredited university. Beyond that qualification, in most states, anyone who fits a hearing aid must be licensed, including audiologists. Someone can be a fitter but not an audiologist, or an

audiologist but not a fitter, but anyone who examines your ears and then dispenses you hearing aids must be certified!

Check not only on the company website, but on your specialist's LinkedIn profile as well.

### **Ability to create and maintain a relationship with your specialist**

Does the office have regular opening hours? Is the front desk staff knowledgeable and friendly? Could you reach your doctor by email or in an emergency?

### **Length company of service in the industry**

Has the business established itself in the



community well enough to stay open? Will they be there for you down the line when you need them?

### **Convenience of locations**

You will most likely be visiting your doctor frequently - do you like the locations they offer? Can you find parking?

### **Quality of testing equipment**

Audiological equipment is expensive. Please make sure you are making an appointment at a clinic with top-of-the-line equipment - you will get the most accurate results. You will also save yourself the hassle - and potential danger - of an inaccurate diagnosis.

### **Service promise and guarantees - warranties**

What happens if your purchased equipment malfunctions? Will you be out a great deal of money or are you covered by some sort of warranty?

### **Protect the value of your investment - loss and damage guarantees, trade-in**

If you end up needing a hearing device, you will most likely be making some degree of personal investment. Look for practices that offer trade-in rebates towards the purchase of your next set of hearing aids.



### **Testimonials - online, reports, third-party, youtube**

What are people saying about the company you are looking into? Are there positive accounts of the service that patients have been given? Is there anything negative on a non biased third-party site?

### **Simple, easy to understand product portfolio**

Less is MORE guys. not like a million cables and trial and error. good product good results yay. good products badly programmed because of lack of knowledge equals bad.

### **Research and Development**

Before you choose a provider, do some research on who manufactures their hearing aids. Is that company continually investing in developing new cutting-edge products?



## A FINAL WORD

Perhaps by now you feel just slightly more empowered to take the next steps towards regaining your five senses. Maybe you didn't even realize the extent of what you were missing. You may have thought that your hearing loss was something you should have learned to endure. Even worse, you may have felt alone in your search for good care, afraid that you might have been at the mercy of someone incompetent who would overcharge you for subpar services.

Now you know differently. You know what to look for in a hearing care professional and the company they work for, the risks of leaving your hearing loss unchecked and untreated, and how those around you can amend their behavior in order to be more supportive of you in your time of need. No matter your age, location, socioeconomic status, or hearing ability, there is a solution for you. Please, go and find it, precious sound waves are passing you by!

THE INFORMATION IN THIS BOOKLET HAS BEEN LOVINGLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY...



### Our Mission

We endeavor to achieve the desired outcome of successful hearing by combining the latest appropriate technology, our professional skills, and the highest level of personal concern. As experienced professionals we are dedicated to improving the quality of life through better hearing.

Find your local hearing specialist at

[www.iowahearing.com](http://www.iowahearing.com)

Or call (800) 792-9564