

## Patient information

# New hearing aid user

## *Important things about hearing aids — thin tube*

- They are only an aid and will not return your hearing to 'normal'.
- They will always have limitations, especially in environments with loud background noise, poor acoustics and when many people talk at once.
- Wearing a hearing aid gives you back sound you have been missing, so things will sound loud to start with. This is completely normal and will settle down as you acclimatise to your hearing aids.
- They should be worn all day during the daytime. This allows your brain to adjust to the sounds and learn to use the hearing aids effectively.
- **It can take up to three months (12 weeks) of wearing hearing aids all day, every day, for your brain to acclimatise to them**

## Wearing hearing aids for the first time

It is normal:

- For things to sound sharper, tinny and generally loud, with an echo.
- For your own voice to sound different to how you remember it.
- To notice sounds like your clothing rustling and the clock ticking because you have not heard them since your hearing changed.

As you wear the hearing aids and acclimatise, these differences will settle down and your hearing will begin to feel normal.

It can help to start off wearing your hearing aids in quiet environments initially (e.g. watching TV or one to one conversations) and build up the amount of time you wear them daily over a period of one to two weeks.

## Telephone

- If your telephone has a loud speaker function, use this and hold the telephone in front of you so you can use both ears to hear with.
- If using the telephone normally, make sure you lift the speaker of the telephone toward the top of your ear so the microphones in your hearing aid can pick up the sound.

## When not to wear your hearing aids

- At night when you are sleeping
- When you are bathing / showering / washing your hair
- Swimming
- If your ear is infected or you notice discharge from your ear. Remove your hearing aid and see your GP. Clean your hearing aid and do not start to wear it again until the infection is clear.

## Personalisation of your hearing aids

### Programmes

You may have some of the following programmes (see manufacturer's instructions).

- Noisy situations:** Use this when you are somewhere loud. It will decrease the background noise but may not necessarily help you hear speech better.
- Loop:** Use in public places such as churches, village halls, cinema, theatre. It uses radio signals to receive sound directly from a sound system.
- Music:** Use this programme when listening to recorded music. Do not use this programme for listening to anything else.

## Volume control

Your hearing aid has:

- Volume control
- Linked volume control: When you alter the volume on one hearing aid it will update the other. You can use either hearing aid to do this.
- Non-linked volume control: You can change the volume of each hearing independently.

## Maintenance

### Tube replacement

The tubes can be cleaned with the small plastic wire, as demonstrated during your appointment.

These tubes should be changed every six to nine months.

### To get the tubes changed

- Call 01284 713507 to make a repair appointment at West Suffolk Hospital, Sudbury Community Health Centre or Thetford Healthy Living Centre.
- Drop in to reception B at West Suffolk Hospital, Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 4.00pm and a receptionist will change them while you wait.
- Go to a volunteer drop in repair session. These run most months in various towns and villages in Suffolk and Norfolk where minor hearing aid repairs are carried out and batteries can be obtained. Details and times available on request or at [www.shas.org.uk/hearing-aid-service/suffolk2](http://www.shas.org.uk/hearing-aid-service/suffolk2)

Tube length: \_\_\_\_\_

Tube width: \_\_\_\_\_

Dome type: \_\_\_\_\_

Dome size: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact West Suffolk Hospital Audiology department on 01284 713507 for a reassessment if:**

- Your hearing changes significantly.
- It has been more than three years since your last hearing test and you are struggling with your hearing aids.
- You have been wearing your hearing aid all day, every day for three months and are still struggling.

## **Troubleshooting**

### **If your hearing aid whistles**

- Check you have inserted it properly in your ear.
- Check that all the parts are intact, clean and in good order.
- Get your ear checked for wax, this can normally be done by a nurse at your GP surgery.
- If these do not resolve the whistling, please contact us for an appointment.

### **If your hearing aid hurts your ear**

- Check it is inserted correctly. If you have access to the internet, please visit C2Hear website [www.c2hearonline.com](http://www.c2hearonline.com) for a demonstration on how to insert your hearing aid.
- Check there are no sharp or broken pieces on the hearing aid, mould or tubes.
- If you are still experiencing problems make a repair appointment to see an audiology assistant.

### **If your hearing aid feels too loud, you cannot hear above background noise or background sounds are too loud:**

- It is likely that you are still acclimatising to the hearing aid, especially if it is new or the settings have been changed recently.

- Allow time for the acclimatisation process by wearing the hearing aid regularly during the day time for at least three months (12 weeks).
- If you feel the hearing aids are too loud to wear all the time, build up wearing them gradually. Begin wearing them for a few hours at a time at home and gradually build-up to wearing them for the whole day. This should help your brain readjust to the new sounds the hearing aid is allowing you to hear.

### **If your hearing aid feels too quiet**

- The tubing may be blocked. Clean it as directed above or get the tubing changed. Visit C2Hear website for step by step instructions [www.c2hearonline.com](http://www.c2hearonline.com)
- Use the volume control to alter the hearing aid volume as necessary if there are only certain things you find too quiet.
- If the hearing aid is still too quiet overall, make an appointment to see an audiologist.

### **If the hearing aid is not working**

- Try a new battery.
- Clean or replace the tubing as it may be blocked.
- If the hearing aid has recently been damp or wet, leave it somewhere warm and dry, but away from a direct heat source with the battery door open to dry.
- If your hearing aid still does not work make an appointment for a hearing aid repair with an audiology assistant.

## **Useful information**

### **Suffolk Hearing Advisory Service**

A voluntary service providing drop-in repair, maintenance and battery collection services in Suffolk.

Tel: 01473 467 785

Website: [www.shas.org.uk/hearing-aid-services/suffolk2](http://www.shas.org.uk/hearing-aid-services/suffolk2)

### **Norfolk Deaf Association**

A voluntary service providing drop-in repair, maintenance and battery collection

services in Norfolk.

Tel: 01603 404 440

Website: [www.norfolkdeaf.org.uk](http://www.norfolkdeaf.org.uk)

## **C2Hear**

Provides helpful videos and information about using and maintaining your hearing aids.

Website: [www.c2hear.online.com](http://www.c2hear.online.com)

## **Sensing Change**

Providers of services, including social work, support and communication to people with sight and/or hearing loss in Suffolk.

Tel: 01473 260 030

Email: [info@sensingchange.org.uk](mailto:info@sensingchange.org.uk)

Website: [www.sensingchange.org.uk/](http://www.sensingchange.org.uk/)

## **British Tinnitus Association**

Useful information, support and resources about tinnitus.

Tel: 0114 250 9933

Website: [www.tinnitus.org.uk/](http://www.tinnitus.org.uk/)

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email [info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk](mailto:info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk). This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo)*

<https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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