

Patient information

New hearing aid user

Important things about hearing aids – tubes and moulds

- They are only an aid and will not return your hearing to 'normal'.
- They will always have limitations, especially in environments with strong background noise, poor acoustics and when many people talk all 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 sound and learn to use it 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.
- Your own voice may sound different to how you remember it.
- To notice sounds like your clothing rustling and the clock ticking because you have not been able to hear 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 listen with.
- If using the telephone normally, make sure you angle 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 available (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 send sound from the sound system straight to your hearing

aids.

- 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
- Has 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.
- Has non-linked volume control: You can change the volume of each hearing independently.

Maintenance

Tubing

The tubing that joins the ear mould to your hearing aid should be changed every four to six months, or sooner if it is blocked (it may stop the hearing aid working) or becomes very stiff.

Places to get this 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 between 9.30am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 4.00pm. 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-services/suffolk2

Cleaning

To keep your hearing aid, tubing and mould clean, wipe them once a day and store it in its protective case when you are not wearing it.

If your hearing aid gets wet or damp, allow it to dry out by placing it somewhere warm and dry but not on a direct heat source.

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.
- 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 the 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 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 in 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 the tubing or get the tubing changed. Visit C2Hear website for step by step instructions: 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

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

C2Hear

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

Website: 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

Website: www.sensingchange.org.uk/

British Tinnitus Association

Useful information, support and resources about tinnitus.

Tel: 0114 250 9933

Website: 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. 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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