



## Communication Suggestions

### When Speaking to Someone with Hearing Loss

*Hearing aids, while very helpful, may not solve all communication problems. When difficulties persist, try these suggestions.*

**Get the listener's attention first before you speak.** Saying the person's name and waiting for a response can greatly decrease the need for repetitions.

**Speak clearly and decrease your speech to a slow-normal rate to allow the listener to "catch up."** Pausing between sentences can also be helpful. The best distance for effective communication is 3 to 6 feet.

**Do not shout.** Shouting actually can distort the signal in the listener's ears. Be sure the listener has a clear view of your face so that facial expressions and lip movements are visible and speak slightly louder than normal.

**Rephrase rather than offering a repetition.** Quite often the same one or two words in a sentence will continue to be misheard with each repetition. Rephrasing eliminates many frustrations.

**Avoid conversation if the television or radio is playing, the dishwasher is running, and so on.** Noisy distractions can create difficult listening situations even for those with normal hearing. Always invite the person with a hearing loss to a quieter side of the room, or turn off the noise distractions.

**Remain patient, positive and relaxed.** Communication can be difficult sometimes. When communication partners become impatient, negative and tense, communication will become more difficult. When in doubt, ask the person with hearing loss for suggestions of ways to be better understood.

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