

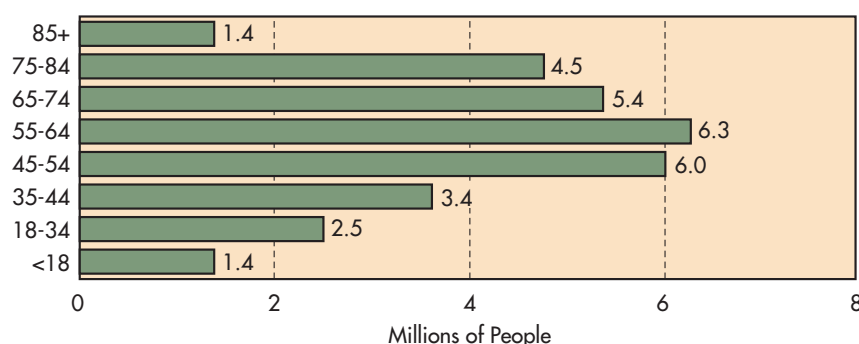


Hearing Loss: You are not alone! Prevalence of Hearing Loss

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In order to gauge the number of people with hearing loss in the United States, 80,000 members of the National Family Opinion (NFO) panel were surveyed. This survey, which has been funded by a sponsor of BHI since 1989, is published under the name "MarkeTrak". The NFO panel is representative of U.S. households.

Hearing Loss Population by Age Group



People with hearing loss are often embarrassed because they think that they are different or that they have a rare condition. The last MarkeTrak survey (2004) estimated that 31.5 million people report a hearing difficulty; that is around 10% of the U.S. population. So if you have a hearing loss, understand that you are not alone. The number of people with hearing loss by age is provided in the graph above.

Here are some general guidelines regarding the incidence of hearing loss:

- 3 in 10 people over age 60 have hearing loss;
- 1 in 6 baby boomers (ages 41-59), or 14.6%, have a hearing problem;
- 1 in 14 Generation Xers (ages 29-40), or 7.4%, already have hearing loss;
- At least 1.4 million children (18 or younger) have hearing problems;
- It is estimated that 3 in 1,000 infants are born with serious to profound hearing loss.

Common Myths

Hearing loss affects only "old people" and is merely a sign of aging.

Actually it is the reverse of what most people think. The majority (65%) of people with hearing loss are younger than age 65. There are more than six million people in the U.S. between the ages of 18 and 44 with hearing loss, and nearly one and a half million are school age. Hearing loss affects all age groups.

If I had a hearing loss, my family doctor would have told me.

Not true! Only 13% of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss during a physical. Since most people with hearing impairments hear well in a quiet environment like a doctor's office, it can be virtually impossible for your physician to recognize the extent of your problem. Without special training, and an understanding of the nature of hearing loss, it may be difficult for your doctor to even realize that you have a hearing problem

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Did You Know...?

... that Pacific Hearing Service, Menlo Park, is now an official demonstration site for the California Telephone Assistance Program (CTAP)? We now have many of the phones available through CTAP on display in our conference room. CTAP is a program which offers an amplified telephone or other telephone assistive device to each person in the state with hearing impairment. *Please come by and see our new display!* We recommend that you call ahead and let us know you are coming so we can be sure to have someone available to tell you about the various options.



Just for Fun!

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were playing golf one fine March day. One remarked to the other, 'Windy, isn't it?' 'No,' the second man replied, 'it's Thursday.' The third man chimed in, 'So am I. Let's have a beer.'

Visit our website at www.pacifichearing.com

New Study Shows Hearing Loss Among Teens Up 30%

For years our patients have been asking us the question: "Aren't these kids wearing iPods all the time getting hearing loss?" We have all had concerns for some time, and now a study has confirmed our fear. You may have seen it in the news. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association reported hearing loss in adolescents has risen approximately 30% between 1988-1994 to 2005-2006. In most cases the hearing loss was slight, but high frequency loss, often caused by noise exposure, was the most common. In addition, we have long known that even mild loss can have a dramatic impact on children both academically and socially.

How much noise is too much?

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has determined that listening to noise at volumes up to 85 dB puts one at great risk for hearing loss. In the workplace, workers exposed to this much noise are required to wear earplugs. For comparison, an MP3 player set at maximum volume can reach 105 dB. Principles of sound measurement, which use a logarithmic scale, tell us that 105dB is 100 times as loud as 85 dB! This means a person listening

to an electronic music device at maximum volume could experience hearing damage in a short period of time.

Audiologist Brian Fligor (Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School) and audiology doctoral student Cory Portnuff (University of Colorado, Boulder) estimated that most people could safely listen to their iPods, using the earphones that came with the device, at 70% volume for 4.6 hours.

Listening at maximum volume for as little as 5 minutes could significantly increase the risk of hearing loss.

Fligor and Terri Ives (PCO School of Audiology, Elkins Park, PA) found in a separate study that when people were listening to music in quiet environments, they tended to listen at safe levels. However, listening in a noisy environment caused them to increase the volume of the music to risky levels. They suggested using earphones designed to block out background noise (isolator earphones) to reduce the tendency to turn the music up too loud.

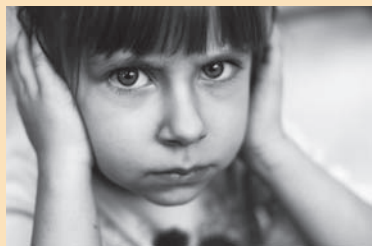
These researchers came up with the following guidelines for users of iPods. The data shown below is for iPod stock earphones only. More complete data is available in their study. It is

important to understand that both the type of earphone used and number of hours per day exposed affect the risk factor. Also, some songs download at louder levels than others. You should be aware that several variables affect these listening guidelines.

Volume/Listening Guideline for iPod Users	
% of Volume Control	Maximum listening time per day (iPod stock phones)
10-50%	No limit
60%	18 hours
70%	4.6 hours
80%	1.2 hours
90%	18 minutes
100%	5 minutes

Still not sure? Use these guidelines to help you determine safe levels. The noise is too loud if...

- You have to raise your voice to be heard
- The noise hurts
- Your ears ring or buzz after exposure



Custom-Made Hearing Protection Earplugs Available at Pacific Hearing Service

Do you enjoy going to concerts but worry about the loud volume damaging your

hearing? Are you routinely exposed to loud noise such as motorcycles or woodworking tools? Or perhaps you just need a good night's sleep due to a snoring spouse! Custom earplugs are available that address each of these concerns. For example, regular earplugs might distort music you are listening to. Special musician's

plugs are designed to protect your hearing while maintaining the integrity of the music. Sleep plugs are made from soft material and, since they are custom made, are contoured to the specific shape and size of your ear to maximize comfort. How do we do it? We make an impression of your ear using a silicon based material. Then the impressions are sent to a lab where your earplugs are crafted to meet your specific needs. Please allow two weeks for delivery. *Ask us about special plugs for your iPod, too!*