



**HEARING
AWARENESS
WEEK
23-29 AUGUST**

**Prevention
At work**

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In Australia, hearing loss is more prevalent than all national health priorities except musculoskeletal conditions. This means hearing loss is more common than cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, asthma, cancer and mental health. ¹

ONE IN SIX AUSTRALIANS have a hearing impairment

Looking after your hearing is important, once its gone it never comes back.

Wear hearing protection in noisy work areas, even if the noise only lasts for a short time.

Talk with your OH&S Officer about making your workplace quieter. Your employer must provide you with a safe working environment and this means noise injury as well.

Consider noise levels when purchasing plant or equipment.

Have your hearing tested regularly.

During Hearing Awareness Week, many audiology clinics will be offering free hearing checks.

Visit the Event calendar at www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au to find out what is happening near you.





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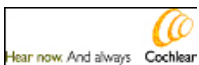


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Background information Noise induced hearing loss occurs from exposure to loud sounds.

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. But what is unwanted by some may be wanted by others. The ear does not differentiate between noise and sound. That is done by the brain.

Sounds that are sufficiently loud to damage sensitive inner ear structures can cause irreversible hearing loss.

Hearing loss associated with noise exposure can occur at any age and is often characterised by the difficulty in understanding speech and the presence of a ringing noise (Tinnitus) in your ears when no such sound exists. This form of hearing loss is almost entirely preventable.

Take care of whatever hearing you have left

Don't expose yourself to loud noises such as

Rural/farm noise, Recreational noise, Noise at work and Noise at the gym

In 2005 it was estimated that 3.55 million Australians had some form of hearing loss.

- Children (0-14 years) – 10,268
- Adults (15 years and over) - 3,534,963 of that 49.5% were of working age (15-64 years) and 64% of people were over 60 years with 37% aged 70 years or more.¹

People often wait 7-10 years before they seek help for their hearing (from when they first notice).

Men have a higher incidence of hearing loss than women, particularly older men, mainly due to noise exposure in the workplace and war service.

The number of Australians with a hearing loss is increasing because of noise injury; accidents; the environment; the ageing of the Australian population. Family history and other factors can also lead to hearing impairment, e.g. being male, having diabetes, and being a smoker.

Visit your local consumer organisation to get information and practical assistance to learn how to cope with your hearing loss. Organisations such as Better Hearing Australia, Self-help for Hard of Hearing (SHHH) and Deaf Societies are all places where you can get assistance, and there are many more. For further details see

<http://www.deafnessforum.org.au/links.htm#consumer>

¹ Access Economics 2006 Listen Hear! The economic cost and impact of hearing loss in Australia