

The Demographics of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is more common than you might think. Interestingly, due to recreational and environmental noise, hearing loss is occurring at younger and younger ages. Consider the facts:

Demographics:

- ✔ 28 million Americans are hearing impaired, and an estimated 500 million experience hearing loss, worldwide
- ✔ In the U.S., one out of 12 30-year-olds is already hearing-impaired and one in 8 50-year-olds suffer from hearing loss
- ✔ After President Bill Clinton was fitted for hearing instruments, more than 1 million other baby boomers identified themselves as experiencing hearing loss
- ✔ There are more baby boomers aged 45-64 with a hearing loss (10 million) than there are people over the age of 65 with a hearing loss (9 million)
- ✔ More than a third of all hearing loss is attributed to noise: loud music, loud workplaces, loud recreational equipment
- ✔ Thanks to the above, we're all losing our hearing at a younger age than we were 30 years ago
- ✔ Of the 10 million Americans aged 45 to 64 who have a hearing loss, 6 out of 7 do not yet benefit from wearing hearing instruments

Hearing Loss Facts

- ✔ Hearing loss is second only to arthritis as the most common complaint of older adults
- ✔ Only about 10% of hearing losses are helped by surgery or other medical treatment
- ✔ 90% of hearing losses can be treated with the use of hearing instruments
- ✔ Only 16% of physicians routinely screen for hearing loss
- ✔ Noise above 80-90 decibels on average over an 8-hour workday is considered hazardous
- ✔ Firearms, music, airplanes, lawnmowers, power tools and many appliances are louder than 80 decibels and potentially hazardous to hearing with prolonged exposure
- ✔ A live rock concert produces sounds from 110 to 120 decibels—easily high enough to cause permanent damage to hearing over a 2- to 3-hour period