

Hearing HealthCare News®

A newsletter for our patients, their families and friends



Fall 2018

The Many Ways to Make a Phone Call

The telephone can be a challenge for people with hearing loss.

There are many ways to make phone calls easier. Telephone amplifiers and telecoils built into your hearing aids have been available for years. Now we also have wireless streaming, captioned phone calls and text messaging.

Wireless streaming sends the phone call directly to your hearing aids. Live captioning from providers like Caption Call and Hamilton translates the voice over the phone into a written text display you can read. Text messaging eliminates the need to listen at all.

Each method has advantages. Wireless streaming allows you to take advantage of binaural hearing while captioning adds visual cues (the written text).

Can you combine these advantages?

If you use an iPhone, Android phone or iPad, there are a number of applications that allow you to see the person you're talking with. The best known are *Skype* and *FaceTime*.



With *Skype* and *FaceTime*, you both see and hear the person you're talking with. The visual cues and binaural hearing maximizes your speech understanding—even if you haven't practiced lipreading.

A recent study found that a group of people with severe hearing loss could understand much more when able to see the speaker (as with *FaceTime*). The average score (only hearing) was 48%. The average score with *Skype* or *FaceTime* was 71%. The greatest benefit was for those who had the most difficulty using the phone. In fact, some of the listener's could only use the telephone when using *Skype* or *FaceTime*.

Do you *have* to use *FaceTime* or *Skype*? No, and most times you won't. But you should consider using *FaceTime* or *Skype* when you want to make it easier to have a conversation—and you get to look at the person you're talking with too!

What Else Besides Hearing Aids? Other Sources of Help...

Hearing aids allow people with hearing loss to attend regular schools, get better jobs, stay socially active and enjoy a better quality of life. However, hearing aids do not "cure" hearing loss. Some challenges always remain, such as trying to hear in movie theaters and noisy restaurants.

Assistive listening devices (ALDs) provide additional help for these challenging settings.

ALDs allow the listener to hear better and more easily because the sound is sent directly from the source to the listener. ALDs virtually eliminate interference from reverberation, room noise and background voices.

ALDs include large room systems installed in churches and auditoriums and personal systems for use in classrooms, conference rooms, restaurants and cars. There are also devices to assist you in watching television or listening on the telephone. ALDs also include alerting devices such as smoke alarms or telephone and doorbell ring alerts.

For example, **FM amplification** has been used in school classrooms for years



Looping or the use of wireless microphones can enable people with hearing loss to hear and understand even in large room settings.

to assist students with hearing loss to hear and understand the teacher better. The teacher wears a wireless FM microphone

that transmits a radio signal to the student's hearing aids (with FM receivers). It's as if the teacher is always standing right next to the student.

Audio induction loops are often used in large settings such as public meeting rooms.

The induction loop creates a magnetic field that sends the signal to any hearing aid user with t-coils in their hearing aids. This allows the person to hear the speaker without amplifying other distracting sounds in the room.

Infrared transmitters are used in many theaters. Personal infrared systems are also available for home use. The signal is transmitted via an invisible infrared light beam to anyone wearing the lightweight infrared receiver. Again, only the main source of sound is amplified. Other conversations or noise in the room are not amplified, so hearing ability is greatly improved.

The term **wireless connectivity** is often used to describe a technology similar to "bluetooth." A transmitter is attached to your home phone, television set, or used as a remote microphone. The sound is then transmitted directly to your hearing aids, greatly reducing the effects of background noise or other interferences.

There are many other ALDs such as specialized smoke alarms telephone amplifiers and doorbell alerts. If you have a particular communication need, or would like more information, please contact us.

The Listening Project

To view an eye-opening two-minute trailer of a new documentary about the lives and experiences of 14 deaf young adults who use listening and spoken language, go to www.thelisteningproject.org. Identified at an early age, these young adults benefitted from the early use of cochlear implants and hearing aids.

The 35-minute documentary is a joint product of award winning director Irene Taylor Brodsky and audiologist Jane Madell, Ph.D. Dr. Madell is the former director of the Beth Israel/New York Eye and Ear Hearing and Learning Center and clinical professor at both New York Medical Center and Albert Einstein Medical College. Many of the 20 to 30-year old adults who appear in the film were first identified by her as deaf when they were infants.

As Dr. Madell says, "See what is possible for deaf children and adults with today's technology, and listen to what they have to say."

WELCOME

... to our fall newsletter. We hope the information is useful to you and your family and friends.

Our practice is based on these fundamental principles:

- *Hearing loss is serious*
- *Hearing loss deserves professional care*
- *Hearing aids work*