



Caregivers Falls Prevention

Hearing Loss

Our ears and hearing can change with time. Hearing loss can be caused by several different things, including changes in the structure of the ear because our ears get bigger as we get older, exposure to loud noises over a long period of time, medical conditions, or even medication side effects.

Additionally, the organ of balance, called the vestibular system, is found in your inner ear. The vestibular system sends signals to the brain and



other organs like your eyes, joints, and muscles to keep your balance. Ear infections are another thing that may affect our balance, which can lead to falls.

According to the Hearing Loss Association of America, people with hearing loss often wait 7-10 years before getting help! It is important to talk to your provider about any symptoms you are having of hearing loss or any issues with your ears as soon as possible. Symptoms of a hearing problem include:

- You have trouble hearing people on the phone.
- When talking to multiple people, you find it hard to follow the conversation.
- You must ask people to repeat what they say frequently.

- When watching television, the volume is so high that others say something about it.
- When there is background noise, you have a hard time understanding what people are saying.
- You think that people are mumbling when they talk to you.
- You have a hard time understanding children, or people with higher pitched voices.

One possible solution to hearing loss is hearing aids. Over-the-counter hearing aids are now available without a prescription! While not recommended for individuals with greater than mild-to-moderate levels of hearing loss, this is a convenient and affordable option. Learn more about what you can do if you are experiencing hearing loss, including an online hearing test at <https://fallsfreewi.org/prevent-falls/sound/>. It is important to not only take care of others, but also ourselves!

