



**DOCTOR**  
INFORMATION BROCHURE

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## A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF YOUR ROLE IN THE EARLY DETECTION AND TREATMENT OF HEARING LOSS

### IS HEARING LOSS A HEALTH PROBLEM?

Yes it is! Hearing impairment is among North America's leading chronic physical disabilities, and its impact on sufferers has few equals. In some cases, a hearing loss can be symptomatic of a serious pathological process that warrants aggressive medical intervention. Fortunately, in most cases hearing loss is a benign, chronic, degenerative irreversible process that is best managed with corrective amplification, just as eye glasses are used for most vision problems.

It is very important to emphasize that even though hearing loss may not be symptomatic of a serious disorder, it can definitely affect the emotional health of your patient, as well as their relationships.

Helping starts with a few words of encouragement to both patients and their families.

The primary care physician plays a major role in the early identification of hearing loss and it starts with a simple hearing screening.

### A BRIEF ETIOLOGICAL OVERVIEW AND TYPES OF HEARING LOSS

In nearly 95% of the adult population with impaired hearing, the site of lesion is the cochlea, resulting in a sensorineural type loss, commonly called "nerve deafness". In such cases, there is degeneration or damage to the microscopic hair cells (receptors) or cilia in the inner ear causing irreversible hearing loss. In the vast majority of patients, neurons hair cells will function well if stimulated more vigorously with amplified sounds. The most common etiologies of sensorineural hearing loss are noise exposure, aging and hereditary predisposition. Other factors can be ototoxic drugs, viral and toxic illness, disturbance of the fluids in the inner ear of unknown etiology, and invasion of the inner ear by excessive temporal bone growth.

Only 5% of hearing loss in the adult population is the result of mechanical structure damage to the ear (i.e.: the outer and/or middle ear). This type of hearing loss is called a conductive hearing loss. Common causes are impacted wax, perforated eardrum, middle ear effusion, otosclerosis, cholesteatoma and congenital anomalies.

In some cases, the patient can receive partial or complete restoration of hearing through medical or surgical intervention.

### THE PHYSICIAN'S ROLE

Greater awareness of both the physical and psychological effects of hearing loss on the part of the physical can help your patients enjoy life more fully.

A quick simple screening not only reduces the amount of time patients may spend in your office, it also encourages them to get the professional help they need.

Call [Better Hearing Centre Inc.](#) and we will be happy to set appointments for those patients who you think could benefit from better hearing. You can be rest assured that they will receive the best care available.

