



BEST HEARING CENTER NEWSLETTER

FALL, 2007

NEW RESEARCH

The Hearing Review recently published several interesting articles that we thought you'd like to read about. A group of researchers at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders studied DNA and auditory processing tests. They reported that the ability to listen to two things at once is largely inherited.



Your ability to listen to a telephone message in one ear while your friend is talking into your other ear and comprehend what they are both saying is an important communication skill that is heavily influenced by your genes. Their study results that were published in the August, 2007, issue of Human Genetics may help researchers understand a broad and complex group of disorders called auditory processing disorders.

Another study performed by scientists at the University College London and the Imperial College London have shown how the brain makes sense of speech in a noisy environment. Their research suggests that various regions of the brain work together to make sense of what it hears. When the speech is completely incomprehensible, the brain appears to give up trying. In a quiet setting where background noise is minimal and a person's speech is clear, the left and right temporal lobes of the brain are mainly involved in interpreting the speech. Interestingly, this study showed that when hearing is impaired by background noise, other areas of the brain become engaged like the area of the brain responsible for verbal working memory. The brain juggles the possible different interpretations of what is heard until the results fits the context of the conversation.



The researchers hope that this information can help improve the experience of people with hearing loss to develop better hearing aids, cochlear implants, and therapy in the future.



InSight Cinema is a non-profit program based in Los Angeles, CA, that is dedicated to bringing the big screen movie-going experience to the 30 million deaf and hard-of-hearing via open captioning.

Open captioning is different than the closed captioning most of us are familiar with on our televisions. Open captioning means that all the words are right on the screen and are seen by the whole audience without the box that blocks out part of the picture. Movie patrons are not required to sit in certain seats or use any extra equipment. With open captioning the dialogue is beneath the speaker, so you know who is speaking and helps identify characters' names. While watching movies that have open captioning you can see off screen dialogue, music lyrics, and audio sounds (phone ringing, gunshots, etc.) in italics in the upper right hand corner of the screen.



The following movie theaters have limited showings of open captioned movies. Contact them for further information.



Kerasotas Showplace 12 at 1221 W. Boughton Rd., Bolingbrook, phone: 630-659-8823

Marcus Addison Cinema at 1555 W. Lake St., Addison, phone: 630-932-0864

AMC Crestwood Theater at 13221 Rivercrest Dr, Crestwood, phone: 708-396-2361

For more information, check out the website www.insightcinema.org.

4959 Fairview Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515 AND 10706 31st St. Westchester, IL 60154

708-387-7570 e-mail: info@besthearingcenter.com

BABY BOOMERS AND HEARING LOSS

The EAR Foundation reports that nearly half of the nearly 76 million baby boomers in the United States have some degree of hearing loss. These estimates indicate that hearing loss is more widespread than previously estimated. The study also revealed that most of those people are not seeking help.

Dr. Michael Glasscock, Founder of The Ear Foundation, stated that the study showed that Boomers are losing their hearing at a more rapid pace than past generations. He reported that more than half (51%) of them can attribute their hearing loss to exposure to loud noises; such as construction equipment, rock concerts, jet planes, automobile engines, and lawn

equipment. The Baby Boomers are the first generation to experience rock and roll, and they tend to lead a very active lifestyle. 18% of the Boomers' hearing loss was due to a medical condition. The remainder (31%) of them have lost their hearing due to heredity and aging.

The study revealed that hearing difficulties can often lead to obstacles in a person's life--at home, in the workplace, or in social situations.

Glasscock stated, "Whether it's having to turn up the TV at home, asking your children to repeat themselves, or not understanding a friend during a telephone conversation hearing loss can affect your normal routine in many ways. People with hearing loss will often ignore the issue and tread through difficult situations. These results confirm that hearing loss is impacting people's lives, and it should no longer be ignored."



Most of the individuals in the study said they had done very little to find appropriate care or products to alleviate their hearing issues.

If you know a Baby Boomer that is suffering, please encourage them to come to our office for a free evaluation. Hearing aids have come a long way and look and sound much different than hearing aids from generations past.

DOS AND DON'TS FOR HEARING AIDS

DON'T let your unused batteries touch metal; such as, coins or keys in your pocket or purse. If the battery touches metal, it may charge, leak, or in rare incidences even rupture. To prevent this from occurring, keep unused batteries in the original packaging or in a battery holder.



DON'T keep your batteries in the refrigerator. Hearing aid batteries are zinc-air batteries and are activated by air once the paper tag is removed. Condensation inside a refrigerator can cause the tabs to come off prematurely and cause your batteries to discharge prematurely.

DO insert and remove the hearing aids over a soft surface (bed, rug, or carpet) to prevent the devices from being dropped mistakenly on a hard surface.

DO store your hearing aids and batteries in a dry room, not in the bathroom where moisture and hard surfaces exist. If you perspire heavily, you may need to purchase a hearing aid dry kit.

DON'T apply powder, hair spray, perfume, cologne, or suntan lotion when wearing your hearing aids because the microphones can become clogged easily.

