



WHAT TECH & DEVICES MIGHT HELP ME?

FACT SHEET

So, you have taken a very important step on your hearing healthcare journey by having a diagnostic hearing assessment and discovered you have a hearing loss. What now?

First, it is important to talk to your doctor or audiologist to determine whether there may be medical factors that might be adding to your hearing difficulties. If there is wax in your ear canal that is blocking sound from passing through, for example, then this is something that your doctor can attend to. Similarly, if there is any kind of medical condition affecting the health of your middle ears, there may be medical treatments available that can help to improve your hearing. For some ear conditions, there may be surgical options. However, for many hearing conditions, such as age-related sensorineural hearing loss, there is no medical treatment available, and you may need to explore some of the options described below.

HEARING AIDS

Hearing aids are often the first things that spring to mind when we think about treating hearing conditions. Certainly, hearing aids are a very important component of many treatment plans. Most people with hearing loss can gain benefit from hearing aids. However, they are not an 'instant fix.' Hearing aids take time to become accustomed to, particularly if you have lived with a hearing condition for a long time before seeking help. The brain needs time to

're-learn' how things sound through the device, in various listening environments and with various speakers. But given realistic expectations and a little practice, hearing aids can be enormously beneficial to many people with hearing conditions. Hearing aids are not the only solution, however. There are other technological solutions that may help.

SPEECH TO TEXT SOFTWARE

There are apps available that convert speech to text in real-time for live conversations. They are usually available for Android, iOS, and Windows. Here is a list of some free speech to text apps: <https://www.folio3.ai/blog/best-free-speech-to-text-software/>

HEADPHONES AND ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES

There are assistive listening devices (often called ALDs) such as headphones that connect directly to your television for personal volume control. If you wear a hearing aid that is fitted with a telecoil, you can make use of audio-induction loop systems that are often installed in auditoriums. These systems enable the wireless audio signal to be delivered directly to your hearing aid for better clarity of sound.

ADDRESS

1 Hamilton Place
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HEARING LINE

1300 242 842

For hearing, social & emotional support, & general enquiries, Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm

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“ ”

Hearing loss has been a significant part of my world as an adult, being diagnosed in my early 20s. It took me two years accept that I needed hearing aids and haven't looked back since, loving the flexibility of the technology to adapt to most (not all) of my life – Sharon

There are still other devices that are used with your hearing aids to make listening in noisy environments a little easier. Your audiologist can help you to decide what might work best for you, depending on your hearing condition, your hobbies and lifestyle, whether you use hearing aids or not, and – of course – your own personal preference.

CLOSED CAPTIONS

Closed captions include a written transcription of dialogue in addition to a description of musical cues, sound effects and other relevant audio information. They are very helpful when watching television and streaming services. Online meeting platforms such as Zoom often offer auto-generated captions (or live transcription) services too.

COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

Another type of hearing device is the cochlear implant (or CI). CIs are not for everybody – they are a surgically implanted hearing device and are only recommended for people with more severe types of sensorineural hearing loss. There are currently about 14,000 Australians that have CIs. There are three major CI brands – Cochlear (<https://www.cochlear.com/au/en/home>), MED-EL (<https://www.medel.com/en-au/>) and Advanced Bionics (<https://www.advancedbionics.com/au/en/home.html>), and their websites contain lots of very good information about the devices. Talk to your GP or audiologist if you would like to know more about a CI.

This factsheet is intended to be a guide of a general nature, having regard to general circumstances. The information presented should not be relied on as a substitute for medical advice, independent judgement or assessment by a healthcare professional, with consideration of the particular needs and individual circumstances. This factsheet reflects information available at the time of its preparation, but its currency should be determined having regard to other available information. Soundfair disclaims all liability to users of the information provided.

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