



## The Personal Costs of Ignoring Your Hearing Loss

Sometimes, it's easy to see the costs of a decision. For example, if you drive around on a flat tire, you wear your tires out. You may have to pay for a realignment or new axle.

But sometimes the **costs of a decision are more subtle**, or it's hard to see the connection. If you never eat your vegetables, eventually your health will suffer.

Hearing loss falls into the latter category. It's hard to see the real costs and connections except in hindsight. But they're definitely there.

What's the harm in putting off treating your hearing loss?

### What Does Hearing Loss Cost You?

*The costs are far-reaching.*



## On the Job Costs

The Better Hearing Institute found that people with untreated hearing loss make on average \$12,000 less each year compared to those with normal hearing.

This could be attributed to the following. Research shows that with hearing loss you're at increased risk of:

- **Injury** leading to temporary disability
- **Struggles** in job performance
- **Trouble hearing/understanding** instructions
- Getting into **arguments** because of something you think someone said or didn't say
- **Missing out** on promotions/raises
- **Missing work**

*But it doesn't end there.*





## Costs At Home

People with untreated hearing loss are also more likely to **struggle with personal relationships**. One study found that people with hearing loss have more arguments with family, and 33% said that hearing loss caused most of their arguments.

One out of 16 people with hearing loss says that their spouse has threatened divorce if they don't get help. 20% of people with hearing loss admit that they regularly lie to family about how bad it is.

People with untreated hearing loss are twice as likely to end up **isolated from friends and family**, leaving them without a “safety net” when they're sick, depressed, injured or suffering from failing health.



## Health-Related Costs

Health-related costs include treatment for conditions that studies show are more common in people with untreated hearing loss like:

- **Social isolation** (cost varies, but it can significantly increase overall health decline rate)
- **Depression/Anxiety** (\$200-\$500/mo plus lost workdays)
- **Dementia** (costs more than you want to think about)
- **Fall risk** increase (\$15 thousand plus)
- **Work accident** risk increase (varies)
- More likely to **go to the ER** (\$2000-5000)

It's time to get serious about your hearing.

# How Likely Is It Your Hearing Loss Needs to be Addressed?

Hearing loss is a growing public health concern, and it's no longer considered a problem solely for the elderly. According to researchers, the number of adults over the age of 20 with hearing loss is expected to double by 2060. If the trends hold steady, more than 900 million will have some hearing loss by 2050. Even now, 1 in 5 adults report having either bi-lateral or single-sided hearing loss.



1 IN 5 ADULTS REPORT HEARING LOSS

Here's how this breaks down across the population:

- Age is one of the strongest predictors of whether an adult will lose their hearing, especially in adults older than 60.<sup>1</sup>
- Hearing loss among adolescents has grown 33 percent in the last few years.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 1 billion people between 12 and 35 are at risk for hearing loss.
- Men are twice as likely to have hearing loss as women.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, around 12% of people currently working have hearing trouble plus another 8% who have tinnitus, (ringing of the ears). 4% of them have tinnitus that's so bad that they can't hear.

The CDC estimates that 24% of this is due to exposure on the job. Despite efforts by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) to curb health hazards, 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels each year.

Another 10 million are exposed to toxins at work that can worsen hearing loss - and catching this early is crucial. These include some cleaners, heavy metals and carbon monoxide. Many of these are just part of a day's work in some professions.



# Tackling Hearing Loss Early

As the prevalence of hearing loss goes up around the world, we need to take measures to protect ourselves. Here are some tips:

- Follow all employer-mandated **safety guidelines** like wearing earplugs, masks or other protective gear on the job. Most of these are tied back to OSHA guidelines intended to keep you safe.
- **Talk to your co-workers** about your concerns, such as work conditions that contribute to hearing loss. Don't make threats. Instead, have respectful, honest conversations with your superiors.
- Download a **sound meter** app on your smartphone. When safe to do so, run some tests. Find out how loud your environment is. And remember these CDC guidelines: 85 decibels for no more than 8 hours, 90 for no more than 2 hours, 95 for no more 50 minutes, 100 for no more than 15 minutes and 110+ = instant damage.
- Get your **hearing tested** every year. Find out how your hearing changes over time. If you're losing your hearing, you may need to look for a safer work or home environment.

Finally, don't wait to talk to us about your work environment and options for hearing better at work. Many people wait 7-10 years without getting help. They think it's not so bad. Now, you know what waiting is really costing you. The costs are too high.

**Don't Wait. Schedule a Hearing Test Today. Contact Us.**