

PATIENT INFORMATION

Better Hearing with Both Ears



Why do people have two ears?

To widen the scope of your hearing so that you can find out where sounds are coming from, and from what distance. In reality, it is not your ears that do the listening, but your brain. To interpret sounds correctly, the information it receives must be as accurate and as detailed as possible.

Where is that sound coming from?

A friend calling, a car honking, how do you know which way to look? Sounds will reach one ear fractionally faster and louder than the other, your brain will register these subtle differences. This is why it is better to have two hearing instruments if you have a hearing loss in both ears. Sounds will be easier to locate.

The benefits of wearing two hearing instruments

The most important benefits of wearing two hearing instruments are listed below.

Speech will sound clearer

Research shows that two instruments make speech and conversation significantly easier to understand than only one. Just as wearing glasses on both eyes, it makes sense to wear two hearing instruments on both of your ears.

Better understanding in noise

In busy situations such as a restaurant, you need input from both ears to be able to focus on the conversation and filter out uninteresting background noise.

Improving location of sounds

Two hearing instruments will make you feel more in touch with your surroundings. You will know which way to turn when friends or relatives are trying to get your attention.

Listening will be easier

Forcing one ear to do the work of two can be extremely tiring, some people can feel unbalanced. You can balance things out by wearing two instruments and enjoy greater listening comfort, because the volume will not need to be as loud.

You can respond more naturally

With better hearing in both ears, people will not have to limit themselves to addressing you only from your 'good side'.

Your ears will stay in shape

If you have a hearing loss in both ears but decide to only wear one instrument in the poorer ear, the other ear may have auditory deprivation. It is recommended to keep both ears active.

You will enjoy better sound quality

Imagine listening to music on your stereo with only one speaker working. It would sound flat and lifeless, but with two, it will sound balanced and more natural.

You can communicate with confidence

Research shows that people who wear two instruments are generally more satisfied with their performance than those who wear only one. The more pieces of the auditory 'jigsaw puzzle' you can pick up, the easier it becomes to communicate.

Technology supporting natural hearing

Today the most natural sound quality comes from instruments that use wireless technology. Thanks to a technique called binaural processing, wearing two instruments has become more beneficial. Wireless instruments team up, just as your ears would if they could, to provide a clear and well-coordinated sound picture for your brain to process. This type of sound processing supports the natural interaction between the ears and the brain.

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If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.