



Tips on Hearing Aid Care

MOISTURE/WATER

Water is a serious enemy of hearing aids, as it is with all non-waterproof electronic equipment. Moisture can destroy the microphone and the receiver of the hearing aid, clog the sound opening or earmold tubing, and cause corrosion in the aid. Moisture in the hearing aid can cause a static sound or can cause the hearing aid to operate intermittently or not at all. Moisture comes from a variety of sources, including perspiration, high humidity, and direct submersion in water. To avoid the damaging effects of moisture, follow these tips:

- Be particularly careful when wearing the hearing aid outdoors in extreme cold or wet and rainy weather. Use an umbrella or hat when it is raining.
- Never wear the aid while taking a bath or shower, swimming, or in a saunas or steambath.
- Ensure that your hair and ears are dry before you put on your hearing aid.
- Remove the hearing aid when at the hairdresser.
- If perspiration is excessive, avoid wearing the hearing aid during strenuous activity and in hot, humid weather. A protective wrapping material is available for behind-the-ear hearing aids.
- If the hearing aid gets wet, it is important to remove the battery promptly and let the hearing aid dry out for several hours. Use a Dri-Aid kit to facilitate drying of the hearing aid. Follow the directions on the kit and be sure to rejuvenate the crystals periodically. Do not use a hot air dryer, oven, clothes dryer, microwave, or other source of heat to dry the hearing aid.
- For best results in prolonging the life of a hearing aid, store the instrument overnight in a tightly closed container with a silica gel packet to absorb moisture. When storing the hearing aid with silica gel crystals, be sure to remove the battery before doing so.

TEMPERATURE

Excessive heat and cold may also damage the hearing aid. Avoid storing your hearing aid near sources of heat or cold, such as a radiator, near a sunny window, in the car during summer, in the refrigerator or ice chest, etc.

SHOCK AND VIBRATION

Hearing aids can suffer internal and/or external damage if dropped on a hard

surface. This possibility can be avoided in the following ways:

- Change the battery in your hearing aid over the counter or bed. Place a towel over a hard surface
- Avoid inserting or removing your hearing aid while in motion
- Store your hearing aid in a cushioned case
- Avoid storing your hearing aid loose in your pocket

COSMETICS

Hair spray, perfume, cologne, bath powder, aftershave, and shaving cream can clog the microphone opening and build up debris on your hearing aid. Be sure to take off your hearing aids or cover them before applying these products. Also, do not wear the aid when using a hair dryer, either at home or at the hairdresser.

ANIMALS

Dogs and cats (as well as other animals) love hearing aids! Two things cause dogs to be attracted to hearing aids: 1) the high pitched squealing sound of feedback, and 2) the smell of your skin oils. Dogs have been known to chew as well as swallow hearing aids. Cats see your hearing aid as a toy and enjoy batting it around the house. Be sure to safely store your hearing aid in a case or Dri-aid kit that is out of reach of any pets, and remember to do this as well when you are a guest in homes with pets.

BATTERIES

IMPORTANT: Hearing aid batteries are toxic. Keep them away from children and pets as they are harmful if swallowed.

Care and use of batteries:

- Always carry extra batteries for your hearing aid as batteries tend to die quickly, sometimes unexpectedly
- Do not keep extra batteries loose in your pocket or purse with other coins or metal objects
- Store batteries in a drawer, not in the refrigerator
- For longer battery life, open the battery compartment or remove the battery from your hearing aid every night
- Do not remove the tab on the hearing aid battery until you plan to use the battery
- Watch for corrosion on the battery; if you notice a white powdery substance on the battery replace it immediately. Also, check the battery contacts within the hearing aid to assure they are free of corrosion
- Battery contacts may be dried with a dry cotton swab in cases of humid weather or heavy perspiration.

CLEANING HEARING AIDS

Debris and ear wax can cause a multitude of problems for hearing aids, most often causing the hearing aid to be distorted or dead. Therefore, it is important to keep your hearing aids clean at all times. Inspect the hearing aid upon removing it from your ear and clean it as often as necessary.

IN-THE-EAR/CANAL HEARING AIDS: Keep the receiver tubing (the sound opening at the end of the hearing aid) and vent opening free of wax by using a wax brush, usually provided with the hearing aid. Gently brush across the receiver opening to loosen and brush away debris and wax. The opening to the microphone port also needs to be kept free of debris. You can brush across this opening but never stick anything sharp (pins, toothpicks, etc.) down in the microphone port or you may damage the microphone. Most custom hearing aids today have wax guards that need to be changed periodically. Follow the instructions given by your audiologist in changing this guard. If the wax guard inadvertently is removed while the aid is being cleaned it will not affect the function of the hearing aid itself. The outside surface of the hearing aid can be cleaned by wiping it with a soft, dry, cloth or tissue. At least every 6 months, take your hearing aid to your audiologist for a thorough inspection and cleaning.

BEHIND-THE-EAR HEARING AIDS: The hearing aid itself can be cleaned with a soft, dry cloth or tissue. The earmold can be cleaned by first removing it from the earhook of the hearing aid and placing the aid in a dry protected place. Gently wash the earmold in warm soapy water and rinse thoroughly. Shake out excess moisture and allow the earmold to dry overnight or use a tubing air blower to remove water from the tubing. Be sure that the earmold and tubing are dry before reattaching the earmold to the hearing aid. Tubing will shrink and harden with time. It is very important in order to maintain sound quality and performance to replace this tubing when this occurs. Your audiologist will replace the tubing for you while you wait.

If your hearing aid doesn't work, follow some of the suggestion on the troubleshooting checklist. If these suggestions do not restore function, please contact your audiologist and bring your hearing aid in for a check. Do not attempt to modify or open the hearing aid case to attempt to repair the hearing aid or adjust it. This could void your warranty.