



Summer Edition - 2020/2021

Grafton - Glen Innes - Inverell

www.accenthearing.com.au

Welcome to the Summer 2020/21 edition of Accent Hearing's Newsletter *The Listener*. Here we explore helpful hearing tips and news on all hearing matters.

In This Edition.....

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- What is Ototoxicity?
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Accent Hearing Turns 9 Years Old!



From humble beginnings setting up a clinic in Grafton in 2011, Accent Hearing has grown to be one of the best independently owned hearing clinics in the Clarence Valley and New England areas, with a full time Doctor of Audiology and 3 administration personnel on staff. In November we turned 9 years old and still going strong!

Did You Know?

- ◆ Crickets have their hearing organs in their knees.
- ◆ Cicadas have their hearing organs in their stomachs.
- ◆ Male mosquitoes hear with thousands of tiny hairs growing on their antennae.



Can You Hear At Meetings?

Five important reasons for using a microphone at your next meeting:

Inclusion: As 1 in 6 Australians have some degree of hearing loss, it is likely that most meetings include a number of people who have trouble hearing, even if they don't identify themselves.

Full Participation: Why bother to have the meeting if all the ideas are not heard? If people cannot hear all the comments, they are less likely to feel confident in contributing their thoughts for fear of repeating something that was already said. This holds true for everyone. Encourage full participation by ensuring each contribution is heard by all.

Better Content Retention: When less brain energy is used for physically hearing the information, more of it can be committed to memory. This is especially true for people with hearing loss, but also true for everyone.

Clearer Conversation Flow: If people can only speak when using a microphone — this ground rule would need to be established up front — cross talk and side conversations are minimized. The meeting becomes more civil and participants are likely to be more attentive. A good rule of thumb is to have more than one microphone available to speed the time between speakers.

Support for Assistive Listening Devices: For people using assistive listening devices like a hearing loop, a microphone is imperative. Sound only works in a hearing loop if it is picked up through the microphone. Make sure people hold the mic towards their mouth while talking and speaking at a normal volume.

‘Wax-Out Wednesdays’ with Doctor Greg!

Accent Hearing is proud to be the first Audiology Clinic to offer micro-suction earwax removal in the Clarence Valley. This exclusive regional service is available at our Grafton Clinic.

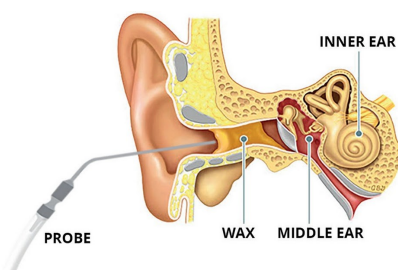
Micro-suction is the preferred method to guarantee safe and effective removal of ear wax as well as other foreign bodies that may obstruct the ear canal.

The advantage of getting an Audiologists to remove ear wax is that we examine many ear canals daily and are able to clearly identify and precisely locate the blockage, making it extremely safe.

A specially devised head-worn microscope (developed by Australian Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) Surgeon Dr John Vorrath) is used to carefully examine the ear. Upon identifying the location and extent of wax within the canal, our doctor of Audiology uses a fine, low-pressure suction device to safely remove the blockage.

Why Use Micro-suction?

Micro-suction procedure usually takes only a few minutes, however can take as long as 20-30 minutes for hard embedded wax. Unlike ear syringing or ear irrigation, where ear wax is flushed out without a view of the canal, during micro-suction, the canal and the ear wax is being directly viewed with the microscope and sucked out. This significantly reduces the potential for perforation of the ear drum or mastoid cavity, improves comfort and avoids complications that may arise from traditional ear irrigation such as further complicating a foreign body.



The Costs Involved

The procedure will involve a consultation fee and may involve two consultations to first identify the ear wax build up (or no build up). Therefore, the cost may vary. There is a chance that the ear wax cannot be removed by this method from either a very hard build up of wax, a current ear infection or other contraindication identified at the beginning and you will have to be referred to an Ear Nose & Throat Specialist for further treatment.

Prior to arranging your appointment, keep in mind that you have to be able to remain quite still during the procedure. Injuries are extremely rare and micro-suction currently represents the safest and most effective means for removing ear wax.

Treatment commences a few days prior to your appointment by applying ear wax softener, available at the clinic or your local Chemist to use at home.



Once the ear wax has had time to soften, the gentle micro-suction wand is used to progressively remove all wax build-up in the ear canal.

How Wax is Produced

Wax is produced by a natural process in the ear canal and is made up of oil and dead skin. While earwax is usually detected in the outer ear, it's actually made in the ear canal. This section of the ear is lined with wax-producing **cerumenous glands**. Earwax, also known by its technical name **cerumen**, is primarily created by those glands. **Sebum**, a fatty secretion of the skin, and dead skin cells also contribute to the makeup of earwax. It's usually made up of about 60 percent keratin (a protein), with the rest a combination of dead skin cells, fatty acids, cholesterol and other compounds. Normally it works its way to the outer ear and is flushed away when the hair is washed, however, wax can sometimes build up as we age, making it difficult for the ear to self-clean. For hearing aid users, this build-up can prevent the amplified sound reaching the eardrum, or may cause the aid to whistle (feedback).

Arranging Appointments

Appointments will be available from late January 2021. If you have wax build up and need to have it removed, why not book in for a consultation. Please note that an initial, investigative consultation may be required prior to performing the procedure. You will be asked a series of questions and sign a disclaimer in relation to your ear health before any procedure takes place.

***Please use a wax softener before your appointment.**



Accent Hearing has partnered with the Australian Partners of Defence (APOD).



APOD was established in 2012, to provide businesses large and small with a way to provide some form of recognition, to say thank you to our veterans and serving Australian Defence Force families. As Greg

our Audiologist is a retired Defence Force RAAF serviceman, **we now offer a 25% discount on full hearing assessments at all of our clinics with any APOD member.** This offer is mainly for Ex-serviceman who are now working in civilian life and do not have any DVA assistance for their hearing health.

Mosquitoes can Hear You from 10 meters away!

A study conducted by Ron Hoy, professor of neurobiology and behaviour at Cornell and Gil Menda, proved it is possible to hear long-range without an eardrum. Their study has now provided neurophysiological and behavioural evidence that *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes can hear human speech from a distance of 10 meters or 32 ft. The mosquito is a vector to the viruses causing yellow fever, Dengue, Zika, West Nile and Chikungunya.

The experiment was conducted in a super-quiet anechoic room. Mosquitoes were fitted with an electrode in their brains and the neurophysiological recordings of the auditory nerve were recorded when stimulated by pure-tones produced from a loudspeaker 10 meters away. "They're hearing at distances that normally require eardrums, but these are hairs," said Hoy. Eardrums work by picking up pressure from sound waves, while tiny hairs sense sound from air particles vibrating at certain frequencies. The scientists observed the sweet spot of frequency that mosquitoes are sensitive to was between 150-500 Hertz. An average human speech is in the range of 150 to 900 Hertz.



The mosquitoes' frequency range

for hearing also overlapped with human speech. "The most energetic frequencies of an average human vowel are in the range of 150 to 900 hertz," Hoy said, so "they should be able to hear" people speaking. However, the study offers no proof that they use it to home in on people. The insects are known to pick up sensory cues such as carbon dioxide, odours and warmth to locate people. Though the results do not offer viable new avenues for mosquito control, they open the door for developing highly sensitive directional microphones and hearing aids that use fine hairs that sense the speed of air particles as they are jostled by passing soundwaves.

Cornell University. "Who's listening? Mosquitoes can hear up to 10 meters away." ScienceDaily. 7 February 2019. www.sciencedaily.com/

What is Ototoxicity?



Up to 80% of adults have hearing loss after chemotherapy. Ototoxicity refers to damage to the hearing or balance organs that occurs after exposure to medications or chemicals that affect the inner ear. Ototoxic medications can damage hearing, balance, or both.

Hearing System

Sounds travel from the outer ear through the ear canal and ear drum, through the middle ear and finally to the hearing organ located in the inner ear. From here, sounds are converted into neural impulses that travel to the brain. The ears are fully formed at birth, but mature through childhood.

Symptoms of Ototoxicity

Damage to the hearing organs can range from mild to profound hearing loss and may include tinnitus (ringing in the ears). If the balance organs are damaged, the individual may experience symptoms ranging from dizziness and nausea to imbalance and blurry vision (oscillopsia). Symptoms may be temporary or permanent.

Common Ototoxic Medications

Many drugs and chemicals are known to be ototoxic. **If you are taking any of these drugs listed below, do not stop taking them, however, contact your health care provider about your concerns.** **Aspirin, Quinine, Loop diuretics (Lasix), Aminoglycoside antibiotics (e.g., gentamicin, neomycin, streptomycin, amikacin), Chemotherapy (cisplatin, carboplatin).**

Common Environmental Chemicals

It is also possible to be exposed to chemicals in the environment that can lead to hearing and balance problems. These include: **Mercury, Lead or Carbon monoxide.**

How is Ototoxicity Diagnosed?

Diagnosis is made from the individual's history, symptoms, and test results. There is no specific test for ototoxicity, but it is taken into consideration where there is a positive history of exposure to medicines or chemicals known to cause hearing loss. **Can you reduce the effects?**

If you are currently taking a medication and have concerns about your hearing and / or balance, talk to your health care provider.

Use hearing protection | Avoid loud noises | Stay hydrated | Monitor your hearing and balance, especially if you suspect a change.

Introducing.....

Phonak's New Audéo™ Paradise

A hearing aid that delivers an unrivalled hearing experience:

- ✓ Crisp natural sound
- ✓ Brilliant speech understanding
- ✓ Personalized noise cancelling
- ✓ Voice assistant with a tap
- ✓ Connects to smartphones, TV and more...
- ✓ Empowering smart apps



Phonak Mini Charger Case

myPhonak app

Control your hearing aids, access useful features and personalize your settings all through the all-new myPhonak app.

Roger™ microphones

Roger is the optimal solution to improve speech understanding in loud noise and over distance. It also streams directly to your Paradise hearing aids.



Testimonial Corner.....

After years of mixed information about hearing aids and fly by night providers, I heard of Dr. Greg Butcher, a prominent local musician and also a hearing care provider.

As music and hearing are so closely linked, I chose Dr. Greg Butcher of Accent Hearing for my hearing assessment and was not disappointed. His tests were thorough and detailed.

Within a couple of weeks I was so adapted to my new hearing aids that remembering to remove them was more of an issue than fitting them each

day. My most pleasurable experience on the first morning with my new Oticon OPN hearing aids was hearing the birds chattering and calling, which I had not heard for years. I wish to thank Greg and his staff for their assistance in solving my hearing problems.

Mr John McWatters—Yamba NSW



Please note:

All clinics will be closed from 1:00pm Wednesday 23 December and will re-open on Monday 18 January 2021 at 9:00am.

Please call in or ring for batteries now if you require them over the holidays.

All Staff at Accent Hearing wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year over the Festive Season.



Accent Hearing Clinics - 1300 859 828

- **GRAFTON** | L5 'The Link' 50 Prince Street, Grafton Shopping World, Grafton NSW 2460 (PO Box 1500).
- **GLEN INNES** | Glen Innes Chiropractic Centre, 113 Meade Street, Glen Innes NSW.
- **INVERELL** | Skybridge Financial Building, 129-135 Otho Street, Inverell NSW.

Accent Hearing is independent and is locally owned. Our clinician Dr Greg Butcher is an Accredited University trained Doctor of Audiology; a full CCP Member of Audiology Australia & Independent Audiologists Australia; and a qualified Government & Medicare Hearing Services Provider.