

The Do's & Don'ts:

- ✓ **Do** wear your hearing aids on a regular basis
- ✓ **Do** be patient. It takes time to adjust to using hearing aids
- ✓ **Do** clean your hearing aids and earmolds regularly
- ✓ **Do** keep your hearing aids away from pets and children
- ✓ **Do** discuss hearing aid problems with your audiologist
- X **Don't** give up learning to use your hearing aids
- X **Don't** get your hearing aids wet
- X **Don't** put your hearing aid in the microwave or oven
- X **Don't** leave your hearing aids in the hot sun

Remember:

- ✓ Hearing aids **DO** help you hear better in most situations
- ✓ Hearing aids **DO** help you to participate in more group situations and meetings

BUT

- X Hearing aids **DON'T** restore your hearing to normal
- X Hearing aids **DON'T** remove background noise
- X Hearing aids **DON'T** protect your ears from loud sounds so **DO** wear ear plugs or earmuffs to protect your hearing

Other resources:

Hearing Loss Association of America:
www.hearingloss.org

Better Hearing Institute:
www.betterhearing.org

American Academy of Audiology:
www.audiology.org

American Speech Hearing Language Association: www.asha.org/public/

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders:
www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing



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Hearing Aids: The Basics

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Styles of Hearing Aids

The Completely-in-the-Canal (CIC)



The CIC is the smallest hearing aid. Your audiologist makes an impression of your ear canal that is used to shape the hearing aid. CIC aids fit deep inside your ear and are almost invisible to others. You remove the aid from your ear canal by pulling on a tiny cord. They are not suitable for severe hearing loss and are quite difficult to handle and see.

The In-the-Canal (ITC)

ITC hearing aids are bigger than CIC hearing aids and are also made from an ear impression. Although they are bigger than CIC aids, they are still barely visible and take up one quarter of your *concha*, the bowl-like shape of the outer part of your ear.



The In-the-Ear (ITE)

ITE hearing aids come in two sizes: half shell and full shell. Like the ITC and CIC, these hearing aids are made specifically for your ear. The half shell takes up about one half of your *concha* while the full shell fills up your *concha*. ITEs are one of the easiest styles of hearing aids to handle and see, and they are suitable for mild to moderate hearing loss.



The Behind-the-Ear (BTE)

BTE hearing aids fit snugly behind your ear. The BTE is held in place by a plastic earmold that also channels the sound into your ear. The earmold is made specifically to fit your ear. Earmolds come in many different colors, styles and materials. BTEs are suited to most types and degrees of hearing loss, and they can be connected to external sound sources such as televisions or telephones.



The Open Fit BTE

The open fit BTEs are a new style of hearing aid. They are lightweight and small. They have clear, ultra thin tubing with a soft tip that holds the device in your ear. The soft tip does not block your ear canal. This has the advantage of keeping your ear from feeling blocked, but it also means that these hearing aids are only suitable for fairly mild hearing loss.



Parts of a Hearing Aid

- **Microphones:** pick up sounds, and amplify them (make them louder). The entrance of the microphone must be kept clean so that sounds can be picked up.
- **Sound Bore:** After the hearing aid has amplified and processed the sound, it passes through the sound bore into your ear canal.

- **Air vent:** is a tunnel the length of the hearing aid that allows air into your ear canal. It helps stop or reduce feelings of being “plugged up.”
- **Volume control:** allows you to change the loudness of the sound. These controls have become optional due to special processing in hearing aids.
- **Memory button:** Some hearing aids can store different settings for listening to music, being in noisy places, or using the telephone. You switch between settings using the memory button.
- **Battery compartment:** a small hinged door where the battery goes.
- **Batteries:** Hearing aids need power to work. They use a small battery that comes in one of four sizes:
 - Size 10:** typically for CIC aids
 - Size 312:** typically for ITE and ITC aids, and for some open fit and mini BTEs
 - Size 13:** typically for ITEs and most BTEs
 - Size 675:** typically for power BTEs

