

65% OF VETERANS & 85% OF SENIOR VETERANS REFER TO VA AUDIOLOGY AND ARE GETTING THE HELP THEY DESERVE

VETERANS Hearing Loss

SONGS for SOUND

Hearing Screening Results & Referral Letter

REFERRAL to a VA AUDIOLOGIST



Your screening results reveal a possible HEARING LOSS. We are REFERRING you to the VA for a full hearing work up. We encourage you to make an appointment right away and continue with annual hearing exams.

NO VA BENEFITS? Email us at gbailey@songsforsound.com

CHECKLIST TO HELP ME HEAR LIFE CLEARLY AGAIN:

___ First, VISIT https://www.rehab.va.gov/PROSTHETICS/psas/Hearing_Aids.asp to fill out the 10-10EZ form. You can also do this in person at the VA Medical Center or clinic.

___ Once registered, you may schedule an appointment at the Audiology and Speech Pathology Clinic for an evaluation of your hearing. If the appointment is over 1 month from your date, request an *overflow clinic location* or contact us at gbailey@songsforsound.com.

___ The audiologist will make a clinical determination on the need for hearing aids and/or other hearing assistive devices such as cochlear implants.

___ If hearing aids/cochlear implants are recommended, the hearing aids, repairs, and future batteries will all be at no charge to you, as long as you maintain VA eligibility for care.

___ Request information on accessories such as Phonak Roger FM Systems and see if you're eligible. These help you hear in complex environments, including hearing the television, in restaurants and more.

___ Visit songsforsound.com for information on hearing loss; "like" our Facebook page to join others who have taken these steps too! [Facebook.com/songsforsoundpage](https://www.facebook.com/songsforsoundpage)

PLEASE CONSIDER A GIFT OF \$10 to help us give underserved children, Seniors and Veterans a FREE HEARING SCREENING, support our Free Annual Kids Camp and more.

Visit songsforsound.com for more information!

The following companies have shown a commitment to this charitable mission.

Eargo (hearing aids)

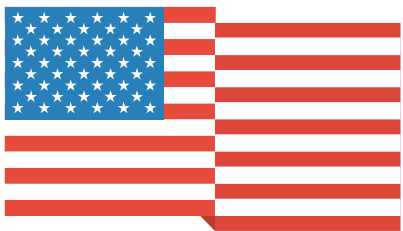
Phonak (hearing aids)

Cochlear Americas (cochlear implants and other implantable technologies)

Otohub (Hearing Screening technology)

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

BE YOUR OWN HEARO &
ADVOCATE FOR YOUR
HEARING HEALTH



FOLLOW UP & NEXT STEPS

- ___ **Make your follow up appointment for 30 days later.**
- ___ **Tryout a hearing aid for 30 days**
- ___ **Ask about FM systems too.**
- ___ **Do your research on all hearing aid brands and ask for a list of brands they offer.**
- ___ **Try out your "ears" in different environments.**
- ___ **Advocate for what YOU want/need.**
- ___ **Ask about RECHARGEABLE hearing aids.**
- ___ **If hearing aids are no longer working well, ask to try a high-powered hearing aid or discuss cochlear implants. CIs restore your hearing and are life-changing devices.**

PRE-EXAMINATION

The Audiologist should do a thorough examination of the inside of your ear for wax build up or other underlying conditions.

TAKING THE TEST

Ask for a test including pure-tone audiometry, speech audiometry, speech-in-noise & words-in-noise tests, tympanometry & tests for hidden hearing loss. If already in hearing aids, request an aided and unaided test.

GETTING YOUR RESULTS

Request a printed version of all results and keep a copies at home. You want to see your progress each year. You can also request an electronic copy. Ask your audiologist to review the terms first, then the results. This will help you follow along more easily.

DEVICE CHOICES

The VA contracts with top companies such as Phonak, Resound, Oticon & Widex. You deserve the Cadillac, but some prefer the Ford Focus. The difference in most hearing aids are the "bells and whistles". Ask to try something for 2-4 weeks and make a decision. Do you want to bluetooth to your phone or hear better in a restaurant? These are important things to consider.



FACT SHEET FOR AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers comprehensive care services to Veterans with hearing loss, tinnitus, and balance disorders. Auditory system disabilities (including hearing loss and tinnitus) are among the most common service-related disabilities in every period of service since WWII. VA is the largest employer of audiologists in the United States, employing over 1300 audiologists. Consistent with the VA mission, Audiology is involved with training and research.

WHO ARE AUDIOLOGISTS?

Audiologists are healthcare professionals trained to identify, diagnose, treat and monitor disorders of the auditory and vestibular systems. Most audiologists are trained with a doctoral degree (e.g., AuD, PhD). All VA audiologists are required to maintain a state license.

SITES OF CARE

Audiology Services are found in over 500 sites of care in the VA health care system including medical centers, outpatient clinics (OPCs) and community based outpatient clinics (CBOCs).

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR AUDIOLOGY CARE?

All Veterans enrolled in VA's health care system are eligible for comprehensive audiology diagnostic evaluations. Specific eligibility rules apply to hearing aid services.



(Photo courtesy of VA)

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

VA audiologists provide a range of clinic services to our Nation's Veterans and Servicemembers.

Services include:

- Hearing screenings
- Diagnostic hearing evaluations
- Hearing aid fittings
- Aural Rehabilitation
- Vestibular Assessment
- Vestibular Rehabilitation
- Tinnitus Assessment
- Tinnitus Rehabilitation
- Ototoxic monitoring

AUDITORY DISORDERS AND REHABILITATION

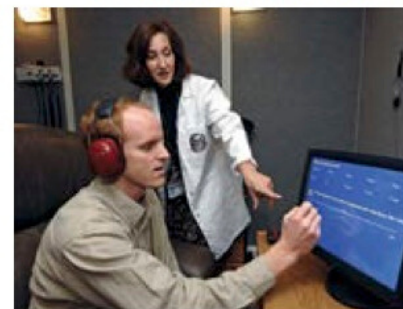
Hearing loss and tinnitus are the most prevalent service-connected disabilities of all compensation recipients among Veterans. Additionally, hearing loss impacts approximately 45% of adults over the age of 65 in the general population. The most common type of hearing loss among Veterans is high frequency sensorineural hearing loss that varies in severity from mild to profound. This type of hearing loss is generally caused by noise exposure, age or both and causes

difficulty distinguishing sounds or understanding speech. The most common treatment for this hearing loss is hearing aids and/or cochlear implants. Audiologists work with Veterans and their families to improve communication by using advanced technologies and extensive counseling.

BEST TECHNOLOGY ANYWHERE

Through national contracting with the Denver Acquisition and Logistics Center (DALC), the VA is able to provide state of the art technology to Veterans with hearing loss. Devices include:

- Hearing Aids
- FM Systems
- Cochlear Implants
- Bone-anchored Hearing Aids
- Tinnitus Maskers/Sound Generators
- Assistive/Alerting Devices



(Photo courtesy of D. Michael Moody)

For more information, visit www.rehab.va.gov
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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Patient Care Services



VESTIBULAR DISORDERS AND REHABILITATION

Problems with dizziness and balance are common among Veterans and are often symptoms of underlying medical conditions. Dizziness problems may be related to part of the inner ear known as the vestibular system. These problems typically cause difficulties with balance. Balance is complex and relies on input from the vestibular, visual, and somatosensory systems. Audiologists perform tests to assess balance function when the following symptoms are present:

- Rapid, involuntary eye movement (nystagmus)
- Room spinning sensation (vertigo)
- Complaints of dizziness
- Difficulty walking

Audiologists work with physical therapists to develop individualized treatment plans to minimize, recover balance, and improve daily functional activities.

TINNITUS MANAGEMENT

Tinnitus is the medical term for the perception of sound in the ears or head when no external noise is present. The sound can be intermittent or constant, range in severity from mild to severe, and is often described as a ringing, roaring or humming sound. Although the cause of tinnitus is

unknown, there are likely sources that trigger or worsen tinnitus:

- Hearing loss
- Noise exposure
- Injury to head or neck
- Stress
- Excessive ear wax
- Ototoxicity

Currently there is no cure for tinnitus; however, there are treatment options. The most common treatments include education, sound therapy (including hearing aids), and counseling/psychotherapy. Progressive Tinnitus Management (PTM) is a tiered strategy used within the VA that starts with education and then continues to utilize more of the involved aforementioned strategies based on the individual needs of the Veteran.

AUDIOLOGY TELEHEALTH

Through the use of Clinical Video Telehealth, over 70 medical centers currently provide care to 210 CBOCs by connecting patients with providers at the medical center. Services available through telehealth include hearing evaluations, hearing aid fittings and follow-ups, auditory rehabilitation and tinnitus management. The VA Audiology and Speech Pathology National Program Office is also exploring ways to provide services directly into the Veteran's home through

computer technologies and mobile device applications.

TRAINING FUTURE AUDIOLOGISTS

Audiology clinics across the country hold academic affiliations with universities to provide training in our state of the art medical centers. The Office of Academic Affairs supports this training by funding student traineeships. Funds are awarded to sites that offer a broad range of audiology services and have demonstrated the provision of high quality hearing healthcare.

AUDIOLOGY RESEARCH

VA supports research focusing on auditory and vestibular functions through a variety of competitive research grants available to principle investigators. Additionally, there is a primary center for research funded through Rehabilitation Research and Development:

- National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR) located at the VAMC, Portland, OR

For more information, contact the Audiology clinic at your facility.