



Hearing Loss Statistics

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Hearing Loss Statistics Fact Sheet

Overview of Hearing Loss

Prevalence

- Globally, over 466 million people (5% of the world's population) live with disabling hearing loss, including 34 million children.
- In the United States, approximately 48 million people experience some degree of hearing loss.

● Age Distribution

- About one in three people aged 65-74 has hearing loss, and nearly half of those older than 75 have difficulty hearing.
- Hearing loss is not limited to older adults; approximately 2-3 out of every 1,000 children in the U.S. are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears.



Impact on Quality of Life

Communication

- Hearing loss can significantly affect the ability to communicate, leading to social isolation, loneliness, and depression.
- Children with hearing loss can experience delayed speech and language development, impacting academic achievement.

Economic Impact

- Untreated hearing loss costs the global economy \$750 billion annually due to higher unemployment rates, lower wages, and reduced productivity.
- Individuals with untreated hearing loss earn, on average, \$20,000 less per year compared to those without hearing loss.

Hearing Loss and Accessibility

Technology Use

- Hearing aids can significantly improve quality of life, yet only about 10-20% of those who could benefit from a hearing aid actually use one.
- Assistive listening devices, cochlear implants, and captioning services are also vital tools for improving communication.

Awareness and Screening

- Regular hearing screenings are essential for early detection and treatment, but many individuals do not receive routine screenings.
- Public awareness campaigns are crucial to educating people about the signs of hearing loss and the importance of seeking help.

Hearing Loss in Specific Populations

Children



- Early identification and intervention are critical for children with hearing loss to develop language and social skills.
- Approximately 15% of children aged 6-19 have measurable hearing loss in at least one ear.
- Access to hearing aids, cochlear implants, and educational support can significantly improve outcomes for children with hearing loss.

Adults

- Hearing loss is prevalent among adults, with nearly 25% of those aged 65-74 experiencing disabling hearing loss.
- Workplace noise exposure, aging, and other health conditions contribute to hearing loss in adults.
- Adults with untreated hearing loss are more likely to experience social isolation and mental health issues.

Minorities



- Hearing loss disproportionately affects minority populations, who may face additional barriers to accessing hearing health services.
- Research shows that Hispanic and African American adults are less likely to use hearing aids compared to white adults.
- Socioeconomic factors, lack of awareness, and limited access to healthcare contribute to disparities in hearing health.

Veterans



- Hearing loss and tinnitus are the most common service-related disabilities among U.S. veterans.
- Approximately 2.7 million veterans receive disability compensation for hearing loss and tinnitus.

Occupational Hearing Loss



- Exposure to loud noise in the workplace is a significant risk factor for hearing loss.
- An estimated 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels each year in the U.S., with industries such as construction, manufacturing, and mining being particularly affected.

Side Effects of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss can have far-reaching consequences beyond the obvious difficulty in hearing. It impacts various aspects of an individual's life, affecting physical health, mental well-being, and social interactions. Understanding these side effects can highlight the importance of early detection and intervention.

1. Communication Difficulties

- **Social Isolation** Difficulty in understanding speech leads to withdrawal from social activities, causing loneliness.
- **Miscommunication** Frequent misunderstandings can strain personal and professional relationships.
- **Reduced Participation** People may avoid conversations or group activities to prevent embarrassment from not hearing properly.

2. Mental Health Issues

- **Depression and Anxiety** The frustration and isolation from hearing loss can lead to feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and anxiety.

- **Cognitive Decline** Untreated hearing loss is linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia.
- **Stress and Fatigue** Constantly straining to hear can cause mental fatigue and stress, impacting overall mental health.

3. Physical Health Risks

- **Balance Problems** Hearing loss can affect the inner ear, which is crucial for maintaining balance, increasing the risk of falls.
- **Cardiovascular Issues** Studies suggest a correlation between hearing loss and cardiovascular conditions due to reduced blood flow to the inner ear.
- **General Health** Individuals with hearing loss may experience a decline in overall physical health, partly due to less physical activity and social engagement.

4. Economic Impact

- **Lower Earnings** People with untreated hearing loss often earn less due to reduced job performance and fewer employment opportunities.
- **Unemployment** Higher rates of unemployment and underemployment are observed among individuals with hearing loss.
- **Healthcare Costs** Increased healthcare expenses arise from related health issues and the need for treatment and assistive devices.

5. Educational Challenges

- **Delayed Language Development** Children with hearing loss may experience delays in speech and language acquisition, affecting academic performance.
- **Learning Difficulties** Struggling to hear in educational settings can lead to lower academic achievements and reduced participation in classroom activities.

6. Relationship Strain

- **Family Stress** Family members may feel frustrated or helpless in their efforts to communicate with a loved one experiencing hearing loss.

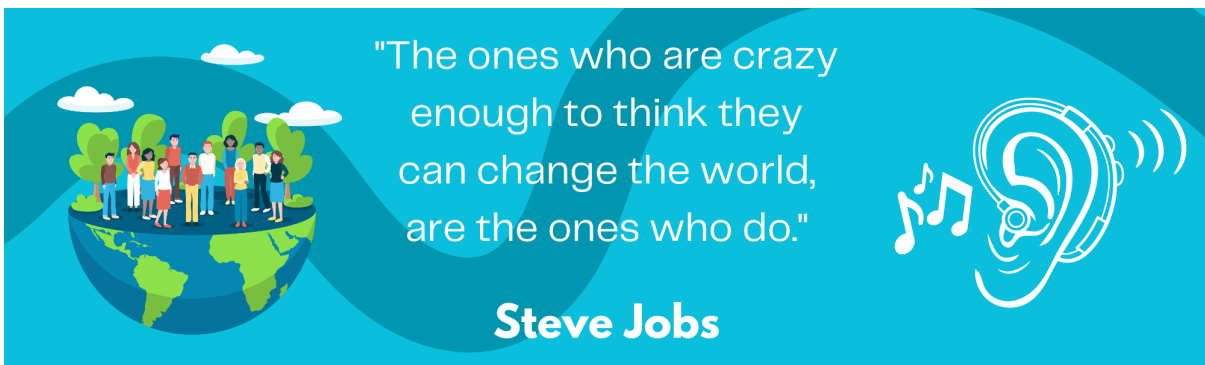
- **Emotional Distance** Communication barriers can create emotional distance between partners, family members, and friends.

7. Reduced Quality of Life

- **Decreased Enjoyment** Activities that involve listening, such as music, watching TV, and social gatherings, become less enjoyable.
- **Limited Independence** Hearing loss can make it difficult to perform daily tasks, leading to increased dependence on others.

Addressing hearing loss through early diagnosis, use of hearing aids, cochlear implants, and other assistive devices can mitigate these side effects. Raising awareness about the comprehensive impact of hearing loss is crucial for encouraging timely intervention and improving the quality of life for those affected.

Global Initiatives and Goals



World Health Organization (WHO)

- Every **May**, we observe **Better Hearing & Speech Month**, a dedicated time each year to raise awareness about the importance of hearing health and effective communication. This month-long campaign focuses on educating the public about hearing loss, speech disorders, and the crucial role of early detection and intervention in improving quality of life.

- **February 25th** is celebrated globally as **International Cochlear Implant Day**, a day dedicated to raising awareness about cochlear implants and their life-changing impact on individuals with severe hearing loss.
- **WHO's World Hearing Day**, held on **March 3** each year, raises awareness about hearing loss prevention and care.
- **October** is recognized as **Audiology Awareness Month**, a time dedicated to increasing public understanding of the importance of hearing health and the role of audiologists in diagnosing and treating hearing and balance disorders.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Addressing hearing loss aligns with several SDGs, including good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), and reduced inequalities (SDG 10).

Resources for Further Information

- **Organizations**

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)
- Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD)

- **Publications and Reports**

- WHO's "World Report on Hearing"
- NIDCD's "Hearing and Balance" statistics
- CDC's "Hearing Loss in Children" and "Occupational Hearing Loss" resources

By increasing awareness, providing access to hearing care, and promoting early detection and intervention, we can improve the lives of millions of individuals affected by hearing loss worldwide.