

Hearing Aid Basics

Will I Be Cured?

Hearing is a complex process that starts with the ears and ends in the brain where information is received, stored and "decoded" into something we understand.

When you add hearing aids to boost hearing, the brain suddenly registers long-lost sounds. Adjusting to amplification requires time, endurance and patience. You are essentially retraining your brain to interpret sounds, focus on some and filter others out—just as you did naturally when your hearing was normal.

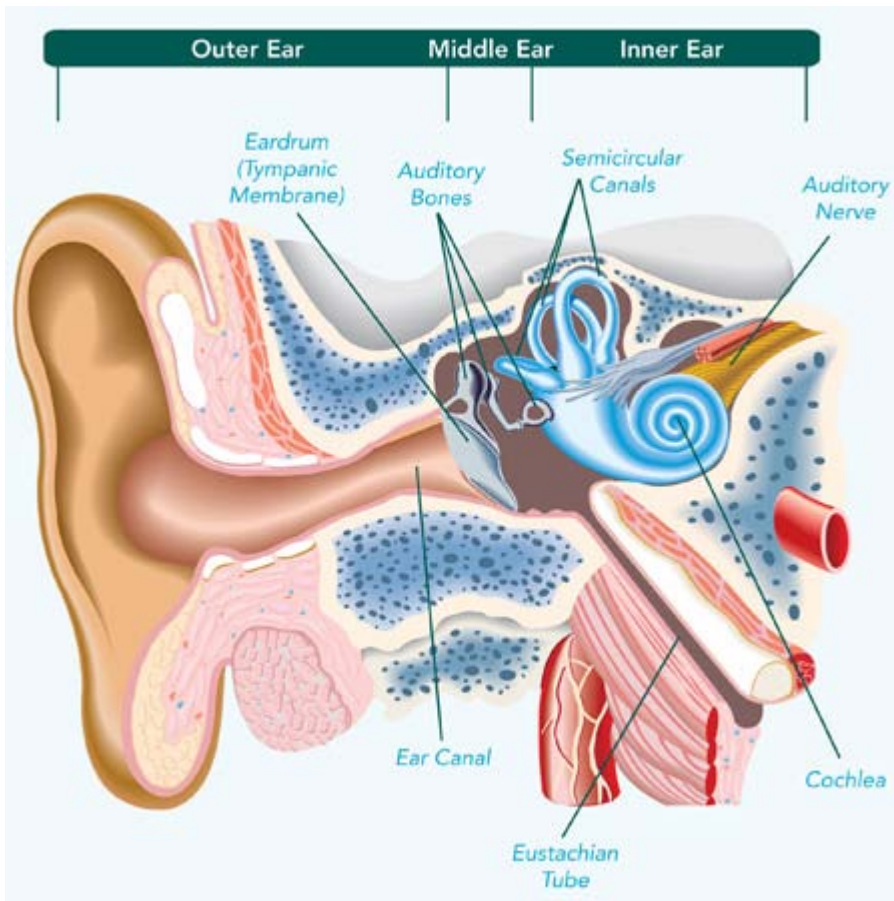
Hearing aids can improve your ability to hear and communicate with the world around you, but they can't "cure" your hearing loss—just as glasses don't "cure" your nearsightedness or farsightedness. They are a tool to help you manage the problem, and while they can contribute significantly to an improved quality of life, they aren't perfect.

Even with successfully fitted hearing aids, you may still have difficulties hearing well in some situations. You will find ways to adapt to your new hearing aids, including watching people more closely as they talk and keeping background noise to a minimum when possible.

Just like new glasses—especially the change to bifocals—it takes time to adjust to hearing aids. With a little patience and practice, and the advances in today's hearing technology, you'll soon discover what you've been missing.

- [Read more about retraining the brain to hear](#)

Re-educating the brain



Adjusting to hearing aids requires retraining the brain to interpret and translate sounds to make meaning.

Hearing aids and your brain: Relearning how to hear

- 1. Be realistic.** Remember that your hearing loss has been gradual; over the years you have lost the ability to hear certain sounds in the speech spectrum and normal sounds of the environment, such as traffic and wind noise, the hum of machinery and other background noises.
- 2. Practice.** When you begin to wear hearing aids, these sounds will be restored but your brain will need “practice” and re-education in order to selectively focus on and filter sounds. Some sounds may even startle you at first. Know that your brain will re-acclimate to these sounds over time.
- 3. Be patient.** It takes time to adapt to hearing aids. Wear them as much as possible at first to become more skilled at recognizing sound direction and to learn which hearing aid settings work best for you in different situations.
- 4. Rest.** The adjustment period may be tiresome. It’s a lot like retraining a muscle that hasn’t been used in a while. But the benefits will be worth it after you’ve made the adjustment.