

THE HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (HLAA) URGES CAUTION:

YOU MAY BE CAUSING YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS, EMPLOYEES, CUSTOMERS, OR AUDIENCES TO LOSE HEARING. LOUD MUSIC CAN CAUSE NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS (NIHL)! PLEASE TURN DOWN THE VOLUME!

When background music is too loud and people try to converse, they resort to shouting just to be heard, which adds to unhealthy noise levels. Loudness is measured in decibels (dB). Exposure to very loud noise or music even for a short period of time can cause permanent hearing loss. To avoid hearing loss:

1. Avoid playing very loud music and encourage family, friends, and businesses to turn down the volume, but be prepared to use hearing protection as needed.
2. Use headphones and earbuds that limit the volume to 85 decibels or less.
3. Wear earplugs **OR** an earmuff when using power tools, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, snow blowers and riding motorcycles.
4. When attending very noisy venues like concerts, sporting events, car races, and shooting ranges, wear earplugs **AND** an earmuff to preserve your hearing.
5. Avoid loud music and noise whenever possible; be prepared to leave any excessively loud venue if you don't have adequate hearing protection.

BE DECIBEL WISE: UNDER 85 KEEPS HEARING ALIVE!

Use your iPhone, iPad, or android as a decibel meter to determine the noise level you're hearing. Free apps are available; iPhone users can go to the App Store and download "decibel meter." Android users can go to the Google Play Store and download a decibel meter. Once you have downloaded a decibel meter, you can check it for accuracy. Talk into it. Normal speech loudness should register 65-75 decibels(dB). Decibel meters can also be purchased at electronics stores. Smartphone users; don't ignore the loudness warnings on your smart phones; turn down the volume.

At 91 dB, your ears can tolerate 2 hours of exposure within 24 hours.

At 100 dB, hearing loss can occur within 15 minutes of exposure.

At 140 dB, immediate nerve damage can occur. If you're ever near gunfire, firecrackers, or jet planes at take-off, which all can be louder than 140 dB; use your fingers to plug your ears and distance yourself from the noise. The more you distance yourself from very loud music and noise, the less your hearing will be affected.

MAXIMUM RECOMMENDED NOISE EXPOSURE LEVELS PER 24 HOURS:

dB LEVELS	TIME LIMITS PER 24 HOURS
85	8 hour
88	4 hours
91	2 hours (a leaf blower, a gas lawn mower)
94	1 hour
97	30 minutes
100	15 minutes (a riding lawn mower)
103	7.5 minutes
106	3.7 minutes (local bar bands & disc jockeys)
109	112 seconds
112	56 seconds
115	28 seconds
118	14 seconds
121	7 seconds (concerts, sporting events)

EXPOSURE TO LOUD MUSIC IS CUMULATIVE WITHIN A 24 HOUR PERIOD. CONSIDER THIS: IF YOU DRIVE TO WORK FOR ONE HOUR AND 1 MINUTE, WHILE LISTENING TO MUSIC AT A VOLUME OF 91 dB, AND THEN YOU DRIVE HOME LISTENING TO MUSIC AT 91 dB FOR AN ADDITIONAL ONE HOUR, YOU CAN LOSE HEARING.

Children's headphones, search on line:

Maxell Safe Soundz, (75 dB limit) ages 3-5, \$17

Maxell Safe Soundz, (85 dB limit) ages 6-9, \$20

Mutant Ninja Turtles, (85 dB limit) ages 7-16, \$20

Children's earbuds, search on line:

Animatone earbuds by ifrogz (85 dB limit) \$9.99

Inserting Earplugs Properly: Use the fingertips of both your hands to roll an earplug to the size of a toothpick. Roll gently at first and then use more and more force gradually, then put your left hand over your ear, lift the right outer ear up and back and insert the earplug. Hold the earplug in your ear for 15 seconds as it expands. Follow the same procedure for your other ear. **You can also find this information on the YouTube video, "Fitting Foam Earplugs."**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DANGERS OF LOUD MUSIC AND NOISE, GO TO: www.dangerousdecibels.org (www.noisehelp.com) , and Google "It's a Noisy Planet.". Dr. Emilio Cortez, Ed.D., is available for free presentations on the topic of NIHL. You can contact Dr. Cortez by email at egcortez1@gmail.com