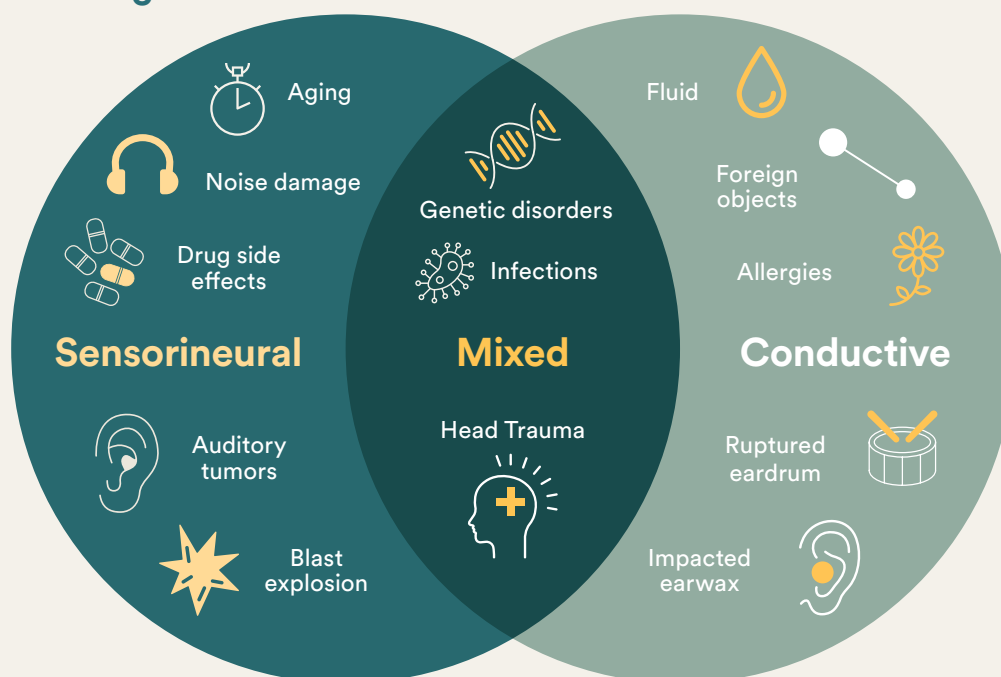


Media Fact Sheet: Hearing Loss

Hearing your best is an important part of healthy living, especially as we get older. But it's more than just our ability to hear sounds – it's essential to our physical and mental wellbeing. Monitoring and treating hearing loss early helps keep people socially connected, mentally well and physically safe.¹

Types of Hearing Loss



For more information on the types of hearing loss, visit 'Types and Causes of Hearing Loss' available on [cochlear.com](https://www.cochlear.com)²

Treating Hearing Loss is Important

- The ability to communicate is fundamental to participating in work, education, social activities, and community life. Hearing loss disrupts this ability, leading to profound social, emotional and economic consequences¹.
- The impacts of unaddressed age-related or adult-onset hearing loss include:
 - Physical decline³, social withdrawal and isolation⁵
 - Lost productivity from early retirement and the costs of informal care¹
- The emotional effects of hearing loss can be far-reaching, with some individuals experiencing distress, frustration, anger, embarrassment, inferiority, shame, loss of identity, rejection, and loneliness⁶.
- Hearing loss can also limit access to education, employment opportunities and economic independence. Employment impacts include:
 - Employment rates for people with hearing loss are 20.5% lower for men and 16.5% lower for women⁷.
 - A person with untreated hearing loss earns an average of \$10K less than people with no hearing loss or treated hearing loss⁷.
- Importantly, hearing loss doesn't just affect the individual - it can also have significant negative impacts on their loved ones¹.

Hearing Loss As We Age

- Hearing loss can affect all ages, but becomes more common as we get older. It is one of the most common causes of disability amongst the ageing population²³.
- Hearing loss increases from about 50% in people aged 60 to 70 years, up to 70% in adults aged 70 years and over, and 80% in adults aged 80 years and over²⁴.
- Hearing loss, especially age-related hearing loss, is often unrecognised and untreated, resulting in delayed treatment which may help stop the progression of problem¹⁶.

Hearing Loss In Asia Pacific

- People with disabling hearing loss in Asia Pacific make up 10.1% of all those with total disabling hearing loss across the world²¹.
- 546 million people in the Western Pacific region live with some form of hearing loss, 7% (38 million) of which are children²².
- By 2050, the Western Pacific region is projected to host the largest number of people with hearing loss, approximately 760 million²².
- It is estimated that the total cost of hearing loss in the Western Pacific region is \$328.3 billion¹¹.



Facts & Figures Australia

1 in 6 (3.6 million) Australians are living with some form of hearing loss. This figure is expected to double to 7.8 million by 2060¹¹, due to an aging population and an increasing number of people being exposed to dangerously loud noise¹.

More than 500 children are born annually in Australia with moderate to profound hearing loss¹².

Hearing loss is three times higher among Indigenous children compared to non-Indigenous children¹³.

Only 1 in 5 Australians who could benefit from a hearing aid use one⁷.

The average age of people with hearing loss who access government-funded hearing services is 79, despite half of those with hearing loss being under the age of 65⁷.

In 2019-2020, the estimated cost of hearing loss in Australia was \$20 billion¹⁶, due to lost productivity and other impacts.

Hearing health affects millions of Australians but is not currently recognised as a national health priority¹⁴.



Facts & Figures New Zealand

Nearly 1 in 5 New Zealanders experience some level of hearing loss²⁰.

In the next 50 years, the number of New Zealanders aged over 70 years living with hearing loss is expected to double¹⁸.

More than 2 years is the average waiting time for an adult in New Zealand eligible for a cochlear implant to receive one and it is not uncommon for the waiting time to be 4 years¹⁶.

Approximately 170 babies are born with hearing loss in New Zealand each year¹⁷.

There is a national prevalence of hearing loss amongst the Māori community with 39-43% of hearing loss notifications listed as Māori people¹⁹.

The estimated cost of hearing loss in New Zealand is approx. \$4.9 billion¹⁶.

Early Diagnosis and Treatment

- Early identification of hearing loss is key to effective management. To identify hearing loss an audiologist or audiometrist can conduct a hearing assessment and ear examination to diagnose⁸. These tests do not require a referral, and they are fast, simple, and readily accessible across Australia and New Zealand.
- Only about one in five with sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL) seeks help for their problems, with many waiting 10 years before seeking help³.
- Research shows that children who receive a cochlear implant at an early age can learn to speak faster than those who receive a device later in life, with comparable learning and development scores to children without any hearing loss⁹.
- In one study of 60 children, from the group of children who received their first cochlear implant by the age of 18 months, 73% scored within the average range for language skills assessed at 10.5 years¹².
- Shortening the duration of hearing loss by treating with a cochlear implant before hearing loss progresses to profound, within approved indications, can maximise outcomes, increase outcome predictability and promote health and quality of life¹⁰.

Common Treatment Options

- If you have mild to moderate hearing loss, hearing aids and counselling by an audiologist are the standard treatment⁴.
- Hearing aids work by amplifying sounds to make them louder. They might be the appropriate solution if you find one-on-one conversations manageable but struggle with understanding words in background noise or if everyday sounds become challenging and affect your interactions^{25, 26}.
- A cochlear implant is an electronic device that bypasses the part of the ear that isn't working, sending sound straight to the hearing nerve²⁷.
- Studies have found that people with cochlear implants could understand sentences 8 times better than they could previously with their hearing aids²⁸.
- Conservative estimates suggest that no more than 1 in 20 adults worldwide who could benefit from a cochlear implant have one^{29, 30}.
- Early diagnosis and treatment – whether its hearing aids for mild to moderate hearing loss or hearing implant systems for severe to profound hearing loss – can offer life-changing outcomes¹.

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Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always follow the directions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information.

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