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# A&A AUDIOLOGY NEWSLETTER



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Our audiologists at A&A Audiology Hearing and Balance clinic are doctorate level trained with experience in clinical, academic, and manufacturing settings. Services are offered using state-of-the-art equipment, following clinical best practices, to assure the best outcomes to manage your hearing, tinnitus, and vestibular needs.

We look forward to seeing you and taking care of your hearing needs. Call us at **(480) 770 - 5444** to make an appointment today. Our office locates at **3226 N Miller Rd., Suite 4, Scottsdale, Arizona 85251**

## Exciting News!

- We are proud to announce we are the winner for the **Best Audiology Clinic** & the **Best Hearing Aid/Hearing Specialist Center** for the **East Valley 2023 Community Choice Awards**.
- We are thrilled to welcome the newest additions to our A&A Audiology team, Dr. Ho and Andrea Hunter. To learn more about them, please visit our website [www.aaaudiology.com](http://www.aaaudiology.com)



## Did You Know?

- Hearing loss is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common health problem in the U.S.
- In 2021, around 466 million people worldwide have disabling hearing loss; 34 million of these are children.
- Over 1.1 billion young people aged 12-35 years were at risk of hearing loss due to exposure to unsafe levels of recreational noise
- Hearing loss may result from: genetic causes, complications at birth, chronic ear infections, aging, head trauma, and side effects of particular drugs.
- Hearing loss can lead to communication difficulties, poor quality of life, feeling of loneliness, social isolation, and reduced access to education & employment opportunities.
- On average, it takes approximately 9 years for an individual with hearing loss starting to wear hearing aids after being identified as a hearing aid candidate.
- Only about 17% of adults with disabling hearing loss worldwide used hearing aids in 2021.

\*\*\*Courtesy of the World Health Organization (2021) & Simpson et al. (2019)\*\*\*



## How Untreated Hearing Loss Is Linked to Falls and Cognitive Decline

Living with hearing loss is certainly challenging, and it is essential to have a clear understanding of how it can impact your health. Let's find out how untreated hearing loss might be linked to falls and cognitive decline:

1. **Balance and Falls:** Inside your ears, there is a system called the vestibular which is responsible for maintaining your balance and spatial orientation. When you have hearing loss, it can affect this system and make you more prone to falls. Researchers have found a connection between hearing loss and problems with balance in some studies (Jiam et al., 2016).
2. **Cognitive Load:** Hearing loss makes it harder for you to hear and understand sounds, especially speech. This can put an extra strain on your brain as it tries to process and make sense of the sounds around you. As a result, you might have less cognitive reserve available for other tasks, including maintaining balance and preventing falls (Lin et al., 2019).

- 3. Brain Changes:** Some studies suggest that untreated hearing loss might be associated with changes in the brain's structure, including brain volume loss. These changes could be linked to cognitive decline over time (Rigters et al., 2019).
- 4. Reduced Awareness:** Not being able to hear well can lead to reduced awareness of your surroundings. This can make you less likely to notice potential hazards, increasing the risk of tripping or losing your balance. Research has shown that hearing loss can affect situational awareness and contribute to fall risk (Loughrey et al., 2018).

Therefore, it's crucial to understand that while these studies have found links between hearing loss and falls/cognitive decline, it's not a guarantee that you will experience these issues. However, being aware of the potential risks can help you take steps to protect your health.

If you have hearing loss, seeking appropriate treatment and management from a healthcare professional is essential. Hearing aids or other assistive devices might help improve your hearing and reduce the strain on your brain. Additionally, practicing good balance exercises and being mindful of your surroundings can help minimize the risk of falls.

Remember, every individual is unique, and the impact of hearing loss can vary. By taking proactive steps and seeking support, you can improve your quality of life and overall well-being. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to discuss them with your healthcare provider. They can offer personalized advice and recommendations based on your specific situation.

*Writer: Ivy Ho, AuD, F-AAA*

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## When Was the Last Time You Brought Your Hearing Aids in for a Thorough Clean & Check?

You only hear the best when your hearing devices are working properly. Now, you might wonder, "How can I maintain the functionality of my hearing devices?" The answer is simple: bringing in your hearing devices for a "Clean & Check" every three-to-six month. This routine maintenance visit is highly important for optimizing the performance of your hearing devices.

During this visit, we will:

- ✓ Do a physical inspection of the hearing device
- ✓ Do a biologic listening check
- ✓ Clean and disinfect the hearing device
- ✓ Vacuum the hearing device
- ✓ Change the wax guard
- ✓ Change the microphone cover
- ✓ Change the dome or clean the earmold
- ✓ Change the receiver if the device is still under warranty
- ✓ Change the battery, if needed
- ✓ Complete computerized electroacoustic analysis, if needed
- ✓ Ensure the hearing device's firmware is up-to-date
- ✓ Address any concerns or questions regarding your hearing devices or hearing health in general

If it has been a while since your hearing aids had a thorough clean & check, call us today at **(480) 770 - 5444** to schedule an appointment with one of our doctors.