

Care and cleaning of
your hearing systems



Hearing aids – reveal and retain the world of
words and sounds

Hearing aids – sharpen your sense of hearing
in a new way

Hearing aids – enhance the quality of life

Information on the care of your hearing systems
is available on the following pages.

Did you know?



How nature protects the eardrum



The eardrum is an extremely sensitive membrane, for which nature has designed various protective measures.

Cerumen (Earwax)

The outer part of the auditory canal contains sweat and oil glands. They produce a wax-like substance, known as cerumen or earwax. This substance traps bacteria and dust. Cerumen is produced only in the outer third of the auditory canal, and then gradually works its way to the opening of the auditory canal where it can be removed.

Protective hairs (Cilia) in the auditory canal

The outer part of the auditory canal is covered with fine hairs which act as a curtain and protect the eardrum against dust and dirt. Dust particles or bacteria which penetrate these protective hairs are trapped by earwax.

The auditory canal

The eardrum is protected additionally by the curved shape of the auditory canal, as its shape prevents objects from accidentally entering the ear and damaging the eardrum.



Did you know?

Deposits in/on hearing aids

Earwax (cerumen) can block the holes and tubes which transfer sound in your hearing aid or earmold. This may muffle or completely block sound.

Some hearing aids, particularly ITE hearing aids, are equipped with a protective cerumen filter, which prevents the permeation of earwax. The integration of a filter is necessary because the chemical composition of earwax may damage the sensitive electronic components located inside the hearing aids.

If your hearing aids are handled properly, they will continue to function for many years and possible problems that may arise during everyday use will be reduced. Hearing aids are robustly built; however, they will not last, if handled thoughtlessly or not maintained altogether.

The following contains valuable pointers on how to care for your hearing aids.



Pointers on how to care for your hearing aids



1. Ear hygiene

Always be sure to maintain ear hygiene. For a professional medical check-up of your ear please contact your ENT specialist.

2. Avoid contact with hair spray or make-up

The fine atomization of hair spray or make-up powder may block microphone openings, the volume control or program control. Remove your hearing aids before using body care products.

3. Protect your hearing aid from dirt

Always make sure that your fingers are clean and dry before touching your hearing aid. The microphone openings are very small and may be blocked if hearing aids are handled improperly.

4. Avoid dropping

Avoid dropping your devices on hard surfaces. This situation may arise particularly while you are cleaning your hearing aids or exchanging the batteries. When you are inserting or removing your hearing aids, make sure to do so over a soft surface, in case the devices slip out of your hand.

5. Protect your hearing aids from intense heat

Be sure not to expose your hearing aids to intense heat. Protect the devices from direct sunlight (at home or in the parked car) and do not keep them in close proximity of heaters.

Valuable pointers



Pointers on how to care for your hearing aids



6. Protect your hearing aid from moisture

Remove the hearing aids from your ear before showering, bathing or swimming. Due to the generally high level of moisture in the bathroom, the devices should not be left there. Moisture and water condensation may damage the electronics of your hearing aids. We recommend removing the battery from the hearing aid at night and leaving the battery compartment open, so that the moisture in the device can disipate. Use a special drying system, available from your hearing-care professional.

7. Clean gently

Clean your devices with a special moist cleansing wipe, designed especially for cleaning your hearing devices. Alcohol, solvents and cleaning agents may damage the devices. In order for your hearing aids to function properly, the devices themselves and the earmolds for behind-the-ear systems must always be free of earwax or other deposits. Special care products are available from your hearing-care professional. He will also be glad to check your devices for you.

8. Store your hearing aids in a safe place

If you are not using your hearing aids for a longer period of time, remove the batteries and leave the battery compartment open. In high levels of moisture, store the hearing aids in a dry case. Always carry the devices in your storage case.

9. Keep away from children and pets

Store your devices out of the reach of children and pets. Devices that are laying around and have not been turned off send out high-pitched sounds which may irritate the sensitive hearing of dogs – some devices have been known to be destroyed.

10. Repairs may only be executed by a professional

Screw drivers and oil are the enemies of every hearing aid. If they come in contact with the electronics or micromechanics, irreparable damages may be the result. If there is a problem with your hearing device do not hesitate to visit your hearing-care professional.



The proper care and cleaning of your behind-the-ear devices



The earmold and hearing aid should be cleaned daily with a moist cleansing wipe. While cleaning, please check the opening of the earmold. Under no circumstances is it to be blocked, otherwise the sound transmission between the hearing aid and ear will be disrupted. Clean the earmold thoroughly at least once a week. Your hearing-care professional offers complete cleaning kits.

Contact your hearing-care professional, if

- you feel discomfort or pain despite positioning the earmold
- earwax deposits cannot be removed from the earmold opening
- the sound tube has turned yellowish and brittle
- the desired volume can no longer be accessed because the hearing aid emits a whistling sound

The hearing aid is never to come in contact with liquids!

Always remove the earmold from the hearing aid before cleaning it. When reattaching the earmold to your hearing aid, make sure that it is completely dry. To dry the tube, it is best to use an air blower or compressed-air spray. Make sure that the earmold for the right side is indeed attached to the right hearing aid (red mark) and likewise the left one to the left hearing aid (blue mark).



The angle of the earmold has
to correspond to the angle of
the hearing aid to which it is attached.



The proper care and cleaning of your behind-the-ear devices with external receiver (loudspeaker)

The hearing aid and the external receiver must never come in contact with water!

- If your hearing aid is equipped with a dome, it should be replaced every four weeks.
- It is very important to clean the dome and the external receiver daily with a moist cleansing wipe.
- As you may remember from the introductory guidelines for the hearing aids from your hearing-care professional, the cerumen protection filter in the external receiver should be replaced approximately every four to eight weeks; at the latest, however, once it becomes visible that the cerumen protection is dirty, blocked, the sound seems quieter or lower.

If your hearing aid is equipped with a custom-made earmold, it is to be cleaned as described in the previous section. After the cleansing process, dry it using an air blower or a compressed-air spray.

This is merely to clean the surface. For a thorough cleaning of the earmold in an ultrasonic bath, please visit your hearing-care professional in regular intervals.



Care and cleaning of behind-the-ear devices (BTE)



The proper care and cleaning of your behind-the-ear devices with a thin sound tube (SlimTube)

The hearing aid must never come in contact with water!

Remove the sound tube from your hearing aid before cleaning the sound tube. To do so properly, please consult the user instructions of your hearing aid. The dome can be kept in place on the sound tube.



After cleaning the sound tube, it is important to make sure that the sound tube has completely dried and that there is no liquid left inside. Thoroughly blow out the sound tube with an air blower or a compressed-air spray.

Please be sure to reattach the sound tube to the correct hearing aid. Simply correspond the color mark on the sound tube to the one on your hearing aid.

- The right side has been marked with the letter "R" and is red in color.
- The left side has been marked with the letter "L" and is blue in color.

The dome should be replaced every four weeks.



If your hearing aid is equipped with a custom-made earmold, it is to be cleaned as described previously. After the cleansing process, dry it with an airblower or compressed-air spray.

Care and cleaning of in-the-ear devices (ITE)



The proper care and cleaning of in-the-ear devices



- Water and solvents may damage the electronic components. After removing the hearing aids, clean them with a cleansing wipe which has been specifically designed for this purpose.
- Remove any earwax deposits from your hearing aids with a special brush on a daily basis. Always clean the hearing aids by starting at the top and wiping downward, in order to prevent earwax or dust particles from entering the inside of the hearing aids.
- If the volume of a hearing aid decreases, the cerumen filter may be blocked. Exchange the cerumen filter or contact your hearing-care professional.

Important when handling in-the-ear hearing aids:

The electronics are installed directly in the shell. Thus the devices are exposed to a higher risk of damage due to earwax, moisture or dirt.

Your hearing-care professional will be happy to give you detailed information on cleaning your hearing aids and recommend special cleansing and drying sets.

Drying of hearing systems



Drying of hearing systems



Your hearing aid contains very sensitive microelectronics. These miniature components may react to moisture by malfunctioning.

Moisture affects your hearing system in the form of sweat or water condensation caused by hot or cold temperatures and may lead to corrosion and subsequently to malfunction of the sensitive electronics.

To maintain the functionality and the life span of your hearing system long-term, it is important to use a drying procedure.

Your hearing system should be dried at least once a week. If your hearing system is exposed to severe moisture, it is best to dry your hearing aids once a day. You can choose from various possibilities for drying your hearing system.

Your hearing-care professional will be happy to assist you.

Sanitizing of hearing systems



Sanitizing of hearing systems



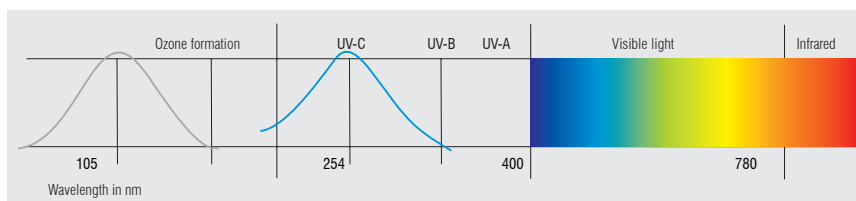
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Microorganisms such as viruses, bacteria, yeasts, fungi and mildew accompany our everyday life, as they are transported e.g. by wind or body fluids. Some microorganisms are useful; others, on the other hand, are pathogens.

Since you wear your hearing aid daily, you are exposed to a certain risk of infection. To prevent infection, there are several care products available to you. The special formulations of the cleansing and care products protect effectively against infection. These disinfecting fluids are now water-based, long-term active and protect effectively against a microbial contamination of your hearing system for a time period of up to 5 days.

A different, new possibility is sanitization with UVC light.

Ultraviolet rays form a part of the natural sunlight spectrum. In the range of wavelengths from 253.7 nm they destroy bacteria, viruses, yeasts and mildew. Air and surfaces are sanitized and the growth of microorganisms is stopped effectively. Sanitization with UVC light is also used today in hospitals to reduce infections caused by resistant germs.



This knowledge has been utilized for the care and cleaning of hearing aids. Regular sanitization of your hearing system with UVC light offers the best possible protection against viruses and bacteria. No liquids and chemical additives needed.

Your hearing-care professional will be happy to assist you.

Malfunctions



Malfunctions: possible causes and solutions

The volume is reduced	<p>The holes or tubes of the hearing aid are blocked – clean the holes/tubes of the hearing aid with a small brush and exchange the cerumen filter</p> <p>The sound tube or the earmold is blocked – clean the earmold and blow out the sound tube with an airblower or compressed-air spray</p> <p>The microphone opening is blocked – contact your hearing-care professional</p> <p>The battery level is too low – exchange the battery</p>
The hearing aid emits a whistling sound during use	<p>The hearing aid/earmold is not inserted properly – insert it again</p> <p>The hearing aid is positioned in the wrong ear – insert it into the other ear</p> <p>The earmold is defect and must be replaced</p> <p>The sound tube is blocked and must be cleaned</p> <p>The sound tube on the earmold is defect and must be replaced</p> <p>The auditory canal is blocked by cerumen – consult your ENT-specialist</p>
The hearing aid does not fit snugly	<p>Contact your hearing-care professional</p>
The hearing aid does not function properly	<p>The battery is empty – replace it with a new one</p> <p>The battery has fallen out – put the battery back in your hearing aid</p> <p>The battery compartment is not closed properly – close the battery compartment</p> <p>The earmold is blocked by cerumen – consult your hearing-care professional</p>
The hearing aid keeps slipping out of the ear	<p>There are oil deposits in the auditory canal – clean your hearing aid/earmold and ear with a soft cloth</p>
The hearing aid causes discomfort/pain	<p>The hearing aid/earmold is not positioned properly or is positioned in the wrong ear – remove the hearing aid/earmold and reposition it. If the problem persists, consult your hearing-care professional.</p>
It is difficult to insert the hearing aid/earmold	<p>Apply a small amount of lubricant on the skin of the ear orifice. Your hearing-care professional can offer you a special care product.</p>

For more information on your hearing devices or if problems arise that cannot be solved with the suggestions in this brochure, please directly contact your hearing-care professional. As he is the expert for everything having to do with your hearing, he will be happy to advise you.