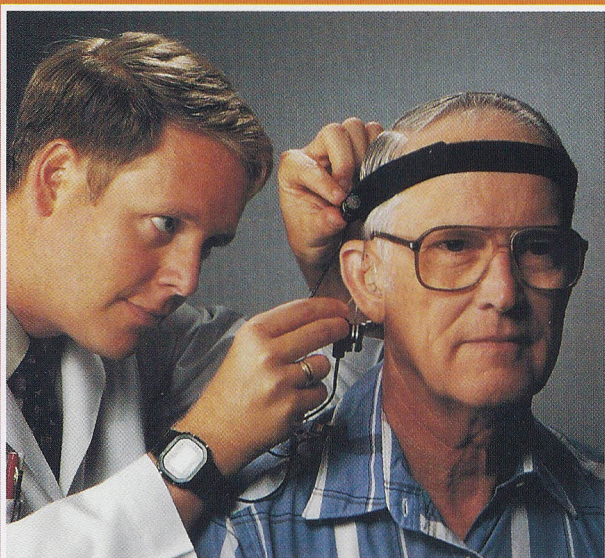


WHAT IS AN AUDIOLOGIST?



AMERICAN
ACADEMY OF
AUDIOLOGY

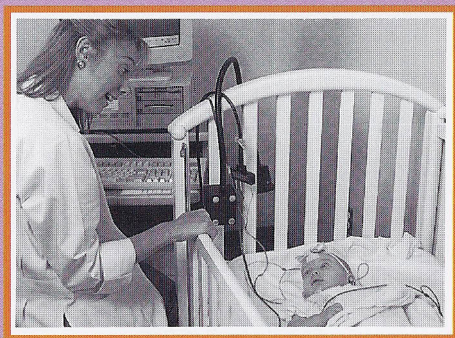


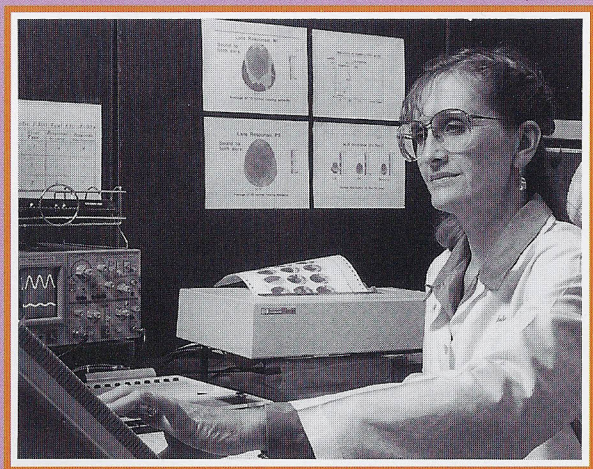
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AN **AUDIOLOGIST** is the professional who specializes in evaluating and treating people with hearing loss. Audiologists have extensive training and skills to evaluate the hearing of adults, infants and children of all ages. Audiologists conduct a wide variety of tests to determine the exact nature of an individual's hearing problem. Audiologists present a variety of treatment options to patients with hearing impairment. Audiologists dispense and fit hearing aids, administer tests of balance to evaluate dizziness, and provide hearing rehabilitation training. Audiologists refer patients to physicians when the hearing problem needs medical or surgical evaluation.

WHERE DO AUDIOLOGISTS WORK?

Audiologists work in private practice offices, hospitals and medical centers, clinics, public and private schools, universities, rehabilitation or speech and hearing centers, health maintenance organizations and nursing homes. Audiologists work closely with government agencies, practicing physicians and hearing aid manufacturers. Audiologists conduct clinical activities with patients, are involved in hearing research, dispense hearing aids and assistive listening devices and teach at universities and medical schools.





WHY SHOULD SOMEONE WITH HEARING LOSS BE EVALUATED BY AN AUDIOLOGIST?

Audiologists hold masters or doctoral degrees from accredited universities with special training in the prevention, identification, assessment and non-medical treatment of hearing disorders. Audiologists are required to complete a full-time internship and pass a demanding national competency examination. By virtue of their graduate education, professional certification and licensure, audiologists are the most qualified professionals to perform hearing tests, refer patients for medical treatment and provide hearing rehabilitation services.

WHAT DO AUDIOLOGISTS DO?

Hearing testing. Audiologists use specialized equipment to obtain accurate results about hearing loss. These tests are typically conducted in sound-treated rooms with calibrated equipment. The audiologist is trained to inspect the eardrum with an otoscope, perform limited ear wax removal, conduct diagnostic audiologic tests, and check for medically-related hearing problems.

Hearing loss is caused by medical problems

about 10% of the time. Audiologists are educated to recognize these medical problems and refer patients to ear, nose and throat physicians (known as otolaryngologists). Most persons with hearing impairment can benefit from the use of hearing aids, and audiologists are knowledgeable about the latest applications of hearing aid technology.

Hearing services for infants and children.

Good hearing is essential to the social and intellectual development of infants and young children. Audiologists test hearing and identify hearing loss in children of any age. This includes newborn and infant hearing screening and diagnostic hearing tests with young children. Audiologists provide hearing therapy and fit hearing aids on babies and young children with hearing loss.

Services for school children. Audiologists provide a full range of hearing and rehabilitative hearing services in private and public schools for students in all grades. Such services are essential to the development of speech, language and learning skills in children with hearing problems.

Hearing services and counseling. Audiologists are vitally concerned that every person, regardless of age, benefit from good hearing. Audiologists provide individual counseling to help those with hearing loss function more effectively in social, educational and occupational environments. It is a fact of life that we lose hearing acuity as we grow older, and that hearing





problems are commonly associated with the elderly. Audiologists are committed to helping senior citizens to hear better.

Hearing aids and assistive listening devices.

Audiologists provide complete hearing aid services to clients with hearing problems. Audiologists are also experts with assistive listening equipment and personal alerting devices.

Audiologists provide education and training so that persons with hearing impairment can benefit from amplification and communication devices.

Audiologists dispense the majority of hearing aids in the United States. Audiologists use the most advanced, computerized procedures to individualize the fitting of hearing aids. Hearing aid options are thoroughly discussed with each potential user based on the results of a complete hearing aid test battery and the individual needs of each patient. Follow-up care and hearing aid accessories are routinely available from dispensing audiologists.

Hearing conservation programs. Prolonged exposure to loud noise causes permanent hearing loss. Because audiologists are concerned with the prevention of hearing loss, they are often involved in implementing programs to protect the hearing of individuals who are exposed to noisy industrial and recreational situations.

Hearing research. Audiologists engage in a wide variety of research activities to develop new hearing assessment techniques and new rehabilitative technologies, particularly in the area of hearing aids. Research reports of audiologists can be found in the professional literature of medical and scientific journals. Audiologists write textbooks on hearing evaluation, hearing aids and the management of people with hearing loss. Audiologists help develop professional standards and are represented on the boards of national and governmental agencies.

More than 28 million Americans have some type of hearing problem. Hearing difficulties are often unrecognized by the person involved. Children and teenagers seldom complain about the symptoms of hearing loss, and adults may lose their hearing so gradually that they do not realize it is happening. The first step in treatment of a hearing problem is a hearing evaluation by an audiologist.

The audiologist is a professional dedicated to helping persons overcome hearing loss.

**How's your hearing?
Ask an Audiologist!®**

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