



Wear Your Hearing Aids or Your Brain Will Rust

by Robert Martin

When I first heard the words “or your brain with rust”, I felt angry and thought some unscrupulous practitioner was misleading patients. Well, that was 25 years ago, and I’ve now seen many patients who do not want to wear their hearing aids. My feelings on how to deal with these people have changed. Some patients need strong encouragement, otherwise their hearing aids stay in the drawer and family and friends suffer.

What do you tell them? Do you use words phrased like “or your brain will rust”? Some patients expect to hear well even if they don’t wear their hearing aids regularly. These are the ones who get my “wear your hearing aids speech” which goes something like this: “You don’t hear with your ears, you hear with your brain.” I then touch the patient’s finger with my hand and continue, “You don’t feel with your fingers; your fingers make electricity which is carried to your brain through nerves. You “feel” with your brain. Your ears make electricity that is carried to your brain through your hearing nerves. You “hear” with your brain, not your ears. Hearing aid use is like exercise; if you want to get your muscles in shape, your need to exercise them every day.”

“Let me ask you a silly question: How well do you dance if you stay in bed all day, everyday, then go dancing on Friday night?” I pause and wait for the patient to respond. “You’d look pretty funny, right?” Legs have to be used regularly or you can’t walk ... same with ears.” I go on to explain, “Conditioning the auditory cortex to the brain is much like conditioning your leg muscles. It’s impossible to sit on a couch and drink beer all week and get healthy leg muscles. What you get are a big stomach and weak legs.” I pat my stomach for emphasis.

When you wear your hearing aids lots of good things happen. You’ll get used to the feeling of wearing your hearing aids. You’ll get used to all the funny sounds. You’ll start hearing better. It takes time for your brain to learn to recognize words through hearing aids. Learning to listen to amplified sound is like trying to understand people who speak with an unfamiliar accent. At first the words seem garbled, but slowly they become clearer and easier to recognize.”

“Wearing hearing aids in noisy listening situations also takes time. It is not easy to listen to one person when lots of people are talking at the same time. But with practice you get better. Wearing hearing aids even helps short-term memory. If I tell you my name is Dr. ...ru...p, you’ll know you didn’t hear the name correctly so it won’t even register in your brain. But if I say my name is Dr. Grump, you’ll think, “Wow, that’s a weird name!” and you will probably remember it. I conclude, “The more you listen with hearing aids, the better your brain will get at recognizing words”.

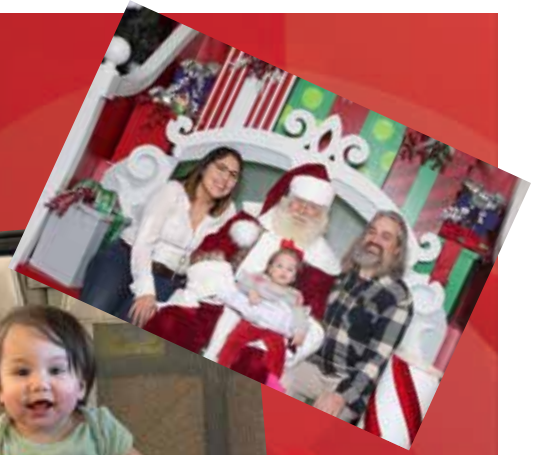
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 Shannon Miller, Audiology Assistant
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Guess Who's Turning 1 Soon

Can you believe it? It's been almost a year since Dr. Martinez had her daughter, Luna. So we thought it appropriate to share the past year with you in milestones and pictures.

Dr. Martinez likes to joke that Luna was born "eating a cheeseburger". Not far from the truth since Luna really enjoys most of the foods her parents and grandparents prepare, but her favorite is avocados. With her room decorated in a baby animal theme, it's no wonder her favorite animal is an elephant. And TV show? Well, the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, of course... Miska, Mouska, Mickey Mouse! Luna is fortunate to be able to spend her days with her dad, Nick... amazingly her first word was Dadda. Luna loves to be tickled and chased, jump and bounce to music, bathtime, and reading books at bedtime. Mischief is on full display as Luna feeds her two dogs snacks when mom and dad aren't looking and then laughs when she's caught. At eleven months, Luna is also taking her first steps on her own.



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HEARING
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Accent on Hearing News

If you haven't come into the office for some time, you'll notice a few changes since your last visit. After many months of enduring drywall dust and searching for office supplies randomly stored throughout the office, we are pleased with our remodeled reception and front office area, as well as an additional patient room and redesigned lab and business office.



We'd also like to formally welcome Donna Babb to the Accent on Hearing Team! She has a background in human services, working with people with developmental disabilities. Ready for new endeavors, Donna joined us November 1st and is the friendly face who will typically greet you at our new front desk.



We are also happy to announce that we have installed an additional test booth. With this extra equipment, we can more efficiently serve our private patients, as well as the many veterans seen through the VA, Care in the Community program and other contractors.

Finally, many congratulations to our own Shannon Miller who has earned her accreditation through ASHA and is now a full-fledged Certified Audiology Assistant! If it's been a while since you've seen us, the Accent on Hearing Team invites you to schedule an appointment for a clean and check or an updated hearing test and see for yourself the enhancements we've made to our practice.



8th Annual Hear for the Holidays Recipients



One of our greatest pleasures at Accent on Hearing is giving back to our community. One of the ways we do this is with our Hear for the Holidays program. For eight years now, we have requested nominations and then donated refurbished hearing aids and our fitting services to members of our community who would otherwise not be able to acquire hearing instruments on their own.

The smiles on their faces is all we need as a "thank you" when they know that they can resume a lifestyle full of sounds and conversations!



Say Cheese

In an effort to offer you exemplary customer service, we are now taking pictures for your electronic chart. If your photo is not in our system, we will be asking you to “strike a pose” when you arrive for your next appointment. Fear not, the photo is going no further than our HIPAA compliant system.



Tinnitus Relief & Better Hearing!

Do you suffer from ringing in your ears? You are not alone. An estimated 10-15% of the global population is affected by what is called tinnitus. This ringing or buzzing noise in one or both of the ears can be present 24-hours a day and is often associated with hearing loss. Although there is no cure for tinnitus, amplification is one option to alleviate tinnitus.

Phonak Lyric, a state-of-the-art, 24/7 extended wear hearing device, is proven to help relieve tinnitus faster and by a greater degree than standard hearing aids. Lyric has also been shown to improve sleep quality, due to 24-hour consistent amplification. The Lyric device is placed deep into the ear canal, approximately 3mm from the ear drum. This placement allows for the most natural sound, all without having to replace batteries all the time.

Accent on Hearing can proudly state that we are Castle Rock’s only certified Lyric provider! Call us today to schedule your no-obligation appointment and 30-day free trial of Lyric.

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Easy Red Velvet Brownies

Ingredients: 24 servings

Brownies

1 package (family size) fudge brownie mix

½ cup sour cream

2 eggs

1 bottle (1 ounce) red food color

Easy Pink Frosting

1 container (16 ounces) white frosting

6 drops red food color



Stir brownie mix, sour cream, eggs and red food color in a large bowl with wooden spoon until well blended. Bake and cool as directed on package. For frosting, stir 6 drops of red food color into frosting until mixed thoroughly. Add additional drops to achieve desired color. Spread on cooled brownie and cut into squares.