

# Your ears deserve an **AUDIOLOGIST**

## **SIGNS OF NIHL**

Noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) can be difficult to detect early on as it often happens gradually. In some cases, the damage to our ears from noise exposure is temporary. However, left unaddressed, noise exposure can lead to more serious and permanent hearing loss.

Signs of NIHL Include:

- Ringing in your ears, known as tinnitus.
- Difficulty understanding someone who is talking from 3 feet away.
- Difficulty understanding speech in background noise.
- Speech sounding muffled after leaving a noisy area.
- A feeling of pain or fullness in your ears.



See your  
audiologist for  
personalized care.

## **NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS**



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May is  
**Speech  
&  
Hearing  
MONTH**

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## WHAT IS NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS?

Hearing is a complex process that – through the sensitive structures of the ear all the way to the brain – involves transforming vibrations from our environment into meaningful sound. Exposure to sounds that are **too loud for too long** can damage this delicate system, which results in noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL).

While immediate hearing damage can result from sudden loud noises (acoustic trauma), NIHL is also caused by repeated and extended exposure to louder sounds. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends reducing your average leisure noise exposure to 70dB over a 24-hour period. As sounds get louder, your exposure time should decrease. According to health survey data collected from hearing tests, nearly 24% of adults aged 20 to 69 show signs that suggest NIHL.

Exposure to noise is part of our everyday lives. From mowing the lawn, to listening to music, we are putting a strain on our ears.

## PREVENTING NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS

Most noise-induced hearing loss is preventable. By taking precautions to minimize your exposure to loud noise, you can significantly reduce your risk.

- Be aware of sources of harmful noise.
- Wear ear protection when exposed to harmful noise.
- Distance yourself from the source of the noise.
- Reduce the volume and length of time spent using personal listening devices.
- Give your ears a break in quiet spaces whenever possible.

## AUDIOLOGISTS CAN HELP

If you are concerned you may have noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL), consult an audiologist.

Audiologists are health professionals who can assess and manage a broad range of hearing and balance disorders in people of all ages. They can address NIHL, as well as provide tools and strategies to help prevent further hearing loss and work with you to optimize your hearing health.

To learn more about how an audiologist can help – or to find an audiologist near you – please visit [communicationhealth.ca](https://communicationhealth.ca).

### SCALE OF NOISE EXPOSURE

