



Five Ways
to feel
Younger
than your
Age

AGE IS A STATE OF MIND

Anti-ageing products are big business, with the global market estimated at \$60 bn. We spend a small fortune on magic creams that promise to erase our lines and wrinkles and use hair dye to cover our greys. But how do we stop ageing on the inside?

If you have hearing loss, you can feel older than your years. The good news is that you can feel younger and protect yourself from the consequences of hearing loss by looking after your hearing health today. What you do now will determine your age perception, future health and wellbeing.

This booklet explains why looking after your hearing health is important and offers 5 top tips to help you feel younger inside. If you look after your body and mind, you will feel, look and act younger than your years.

FEEL YOUNGER THAN YOUR YEARS BY TAKING CARE OF YOUR EARS

Age-related hearing loss is one of the biggest threats to our sense of age and state of mind. We are conditioned to think that hearing loss happens to older people; however, age-related hearing loss can start in your thirties and forties. It comes on gradually, worsens over time, and can seriously impact your relationships, health and happiness. Age-related hearing loss, or presbycusis, happens gradually and goes unnoticed in the early stages of decline. You might think that other people are the problem, mumbling and talking in hushed tones, but there comes a point where there's no denying your inability to hear.



HEARING LOSS IS MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK

Hearing loss is the third most common health condition in adults. Changes in mitochondrial DNA (structures in our cells that create energy) cause cell disturbances in the inner and middle ear and nerve pathways, affecting hearing ability. Other factors influencing hearing loss include inherited and environmental factors, trauma, some health conditions (heart disease or diabetes) and certain medications (large doses of aspirin, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and certain antibiotics and cancer treatments).

SOUND CONNECTS US TO OTHERS

Our ability to relate to others greatly depends on our capacity to hear. As hearing ability declines, it takes enormous effort to hear, which can leave you feeling exhausted. People with hearing loss are more likely to withdraw from social situations, lose confidence and succumb to depression. Furthermore, a lack of stimulation in daily life can also increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. The good news is that early intervention can prevent or slow further auditory decline. But, more importantly, hearing aids can improve your health and quality of life.





OVERCOMING THE STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS

There is a stigma associated with hearing loss, and research suggests that it takes 10 years for a person to admit to the problem. How we perceive ourselves, ageism and vanity fuel our reluctance to seek a diagnosis and pursue treatment. To many, hearing loss is a reminder of an ageing self and an indicator of a disability. Furthermore, some people believe that wearing hearing aids is akin to advertising the disability.

When you weigh up the pros and cons, there's compelling evidence in favour of treating hearing loss. Furthermore, we are living longer and improving hearing health for our future quality of life is increasingly important.

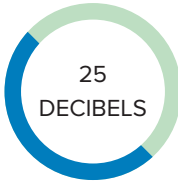
THE CONSEQUENCES OF HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss affects the person and their relationships with family, friends and colleagues. As hearing ability reduces, a person can avoid situations that expose their disability to others. Over time, they become withdrawn and lose confidence. Social isolation can induce stress, anxiety, exhaustion and place the person at greater risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.



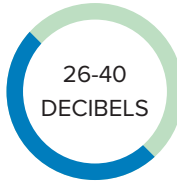
STAGES OF HEARING

NORMAL



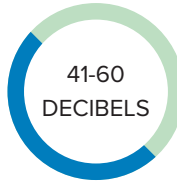
YOU CAN ALMOST
HEAR A PIN DROP

MILD



DIFFICULTY
HEARING
SOFT SPOKEN
CONVERSATIONS
AND IN NOISY
ENVIRONMENTS

MODERATE



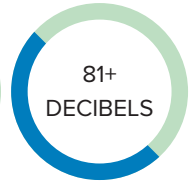
GROUP
CONVERSATIONS
CHALLENGE YOU
AND YOU TURN THE
TV VOLUME HIGH

SEVERE



YOU'RE HAVING
DIFFICULTY
HEARING
UNAIDED IN QUIET
ENVIRONMENTS

PROFOUND



YOU STRUGGLE TO
HEAR ANYTHING

IMPACT

TAKE ANNUAL
TESTS
TO ENSURE YOUR
CONTINUED
HEARING HEALTH

YOU LIP READ TO
UNDERSTAND, FAKE
UNDERSTANDING
AND BELIEVE
OTHERS ARE THE
PROBLEM

YOU MAY AVOID
SOCIAL
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HEALTH PROBLEMS

YOUR WORLD IS
DOMINATED BY
SILENCE



WORKING AND HEARING LOSS

In the past, people with hearing loss have experienced difficulties in the workplace, affecting productivity and career advancement. The Employment Equality Act aims to ensure that people with hearing loss can access the same opportunities as those with normal hearing ability. Under the acts, employers must make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities:

Carrying out adaptations (e.g. installing loop systems)

Offering flexible working times for medical appointments

Providing treatment and support that might help and

Assigning an employee certain tasks, and substituting others for equivalent duties, in consultation with the employer

If you have hearing loss, talk to your employer about changes that will help you in the performance of your duties.



FIVE WAYS TO FEEL YOUNGER THAN YOUR AGE

If you're trying to stop the pace of ageing, follow these five fantastic tips. They'll help you feel better and younger on the inside so that you look better on the outside. After all, beauty radiates from within!

1

STAY SOCIAL:

Clinical studies have proven a higher risk of disease, disability and mortality among over 50s experiencing loneliness and social isolation. These studies also found that less social people showed signs of advanced biological ageing. Keeping in contact with family and friends has many positive benefits, including:



Although developing and maintaining friendships takes effort, it's rewarding, and your friends play a significant role in your health. So stay in contact with friends, reconnect with those who have lost touch with you and make new friends for a healthy social circle.

Fine-tune your hearing - People experiencing hearing loss may have fewer social interactions due to difficulties hearing and understanding conversations. Never let hearing loss stop you from spending time with the people you love.

Don't hide your disability – own it! Be upfront about your hearing loss and tell people how it affects you. If people understand your challenges, they will work with you to overcome them.

2

EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN:

Train your brain: Sedentary and passive activities like binge-watching TV can harm brain health over time. It's never too early to start taking care of your brain. Learning a new skill, language or instrument or taking up a new leisure pursuit will stimulate your brain and reduce your risk of cognitive decline.

Rage against routine! We're creatures of habit. Sometimes it's good to rage against routine and challenge our senses. Take a different route to work, alternate hands when writing or brushing your teeth, experiment with flavours in the kitchen and sharpen your mental skills through puzzles, crosswords and brain teasers.

Don't lose your mind! People with hearing loss tend to shy away from the unfamiliar and withdraw from busy and noisy environments. As a result, their world shrinks, increasing their risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The 2020 Lancet Commission report lists hearing loss as one of the top risk factors for dementia.



Limber up with listening strategies: A study from the University of Maryland compared older and younger adults' brains. They discovered that older adults struggled to process speech sounds when other sounds are present at the same time.

Although speech understanding worsens in older adults, auditory training can help you to recognise speech and sound. If you're new to hearing aids, auditory training will help you adjust and "hear" better, educating your brain to hear consonants and vowels, and improving your listening "stamina".

You can try several Auditory Training Apps from the comfort of your home:



Finding your sense of purpose

Your purpose is as unique as your fingerprint; it's your reason for being.

Grow – become a better version of yourself, turn challenges into opportunities, learn from criticism and stay on task.

Give back – look for ways to help others, donate, volunteer, and spread happiness.

Turn negatives into positives – be solution-focused and help others to overcome the challenges you have conquered.

Practice gratitude – acknowledge the positives in your life and be grateful for them.

Follow your passions – do what you're good at and what you love.

Surround yourself with people who inspire and challenge you.

Never stop learning – there's so much that you still don't know.

Love yourself – embrace your flaws and failures; they humanise you.

Nurture your connection with people – care for your hearing health.

3

BOOST YOUR ENERGY:

Variety is the spice of life

Be sure to eat a healthy balanced diet and exercise regularly. Eat foods rich in vitamins and minerals to keep your skin, bones and body healthy.

Not all fats are bad

Nuts, olive oil, seeds and fish contain unsaturated fats, which can help lower your heart disease risk.

Limit the luxuries

Avoid the bad guys – caffeine, alcohol, chocolate and foods high in salt, saturated fats and sugar.

Lose to gain

If you are carrying excess weight, it can be exhausting. It can strain your heart, place increased pressure on your joints and muscles, and make you feel tired. However, by losing weight, you'll feel lighter and more energetic. If you have a lot of weight to shed, talk to your GP or a dietitian about the best approach to sustained weight loss.

Fill up to fight fatigue

Water helps your body to transport nutrients and oxygen around the body, increasing energy and fighting fatigue.

Exercise for energy

When you exercise, your body produces mitochondria inside your muscle cells. Mitochondria uses the glucose from food and oxygen from the air you breathe to create fuel for your body. The more you exercise, the more mitochondria you produce and the more energy you have.



4 BE PROACTIVE ABOUT YOUR HEALTH:

Going for regular check-ups will make you more aware of your health and encourage you to lead a healthier lifestyle. In addition, regular check-ups can lead to better detection and treatment of chronic illnesses, increase vaccination uptakes and screenings, and give you peace of mind.

Stay healthy, stay connected and feel fabulous.

Here are some of the tests you should undergo annually. Most of these tests are carried out by your GP; however, you will need to attend an audiologist and optometrist for specialist hearing and sight check-ups. If you have a specific health concern, talk to your doctor and he will recommend you for further investigation or consultation.

Consultation

Medical history

Family history

Concerns

Lifestyle

Periodic exams

Breast check

Cervical screening

Prostate cancer screen

Physical examination

Height and weight, Body Mass Index (BMI)

Blood pressure

Blood tests

Urinalysis

Eyesight

Hearing test

FEELING YOUNGER STARTS WITH A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO LIVE BETTER

Plenty of scientific evidence suggests that feeling younger may help you live to be older and that you can maintain a youthful state of mind by feeling in control. You will feel empowered if you take control of your physical, cognitive, and emotional state. A sense of agency may drive down subjective age so that you feel as though you are younger than your years. So what are you waiting for?



5 IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH ON PURPOSE!

Purpose is a set of goals that guide behaviours and give life meaning. Having a sense of purpose makes us feel that what we do matters, contributing to better physical and mental health and reducing our risk of chronic disease. Research has even found that it can help you live longer.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2014/nov/sense-meaning-and-purpose-life-linked-longer-lifespan>
UCL, Princeton University and Stony Brook University.

Recent studies of 1,238 older adults showed that, during a five-year period, those with the highest sense of purpose in life have a 57 percent lower risk of mortality. It is believed those with purpose enjoy better cardiovascular health and are better able to deal with stress, reducing their risk of chronic diseases.

Boyle PA, Barnes LL, Buchman AS, Bennett DA. Purpose in life is associated with mortality among community-dwelling older persons. Psychosomatic medicine. 2009;71(5):574-9. Epub 2009/05/06.

Studies have also proven that having a sense of purpose in life may lessen the risk and symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and reduce the impact of a stroke. For example, Rush University in Chicago found that older adults with a positive sense of purpose in life may be able to reduce their cognitive decline by 50 percent. In addition, the study showed that those who score in the 90th percentile are 2.4 times less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease than those who score in the 10th percentile.

Boyle PA, Buchman AS, Barnes LL, Bennett DA. Effect of a purpose in life on risk of incident Alzheimer disease and mild cognitive impairment in community-dwelling older persons. Archives of general psychiatry. 2010;67(3):304-10. Epub 2010/03/03.

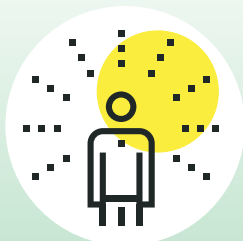
Furthermore, evidence from the University of Michigan suggests that having purpose can serve as a powerful intervention to reduce the burden of stroke. Findings from a study indicated that finding meaning in life is associated with a 22 percent reduced risk of clinical strokes and improved recovery of cognitive function after a stroke.

Kim ES, Sun JK, Park N, Peterson C. Purpose in life and reduced incidence of stroke in older adults: 'The Health and Retirement Study'. Journal of psychosomatic research. 2013;74(5):427-32. Epub 2013/04/20.

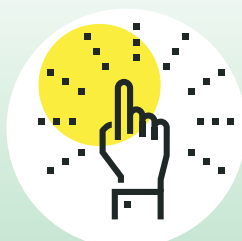
Adopting a purposeful mindset may be a way to remedy sleep disturbances and its associated dire consequences, with studies reporting that a strong sense of purpose in life is associated with a 16 percent reduced odds of developing sleep disturbances.

Ancoli-Israel S. Sleep and its disorders in ageing populations. Sleep medicine. 2009;10 Suppl 1:S7-11. Epub 2009/08/04.

SOUND FAMILIAR ? ARE YOU...



Frustrated at missing
parts of the conversation?



Deflecting the
problem onto others?



Lip reading?



Avoiding social
interaction?



Turning the volume up
to hear?



Feeling isolated
and depressed?

Don't let hearing loss age you. Call or go online to book a free hearing test today to determine your future health and well-being.

Hidden Hearing

Your hearing is our expertise

As Ireland's largest dedicated hearing healthcare specialist, we are committed to ensuring you receive the best advice and care. Early intervention could determine your future quality of life if you have hearing loss. If you identify with any of the behaviours above, we urge you to come for a free hearing test.

And if you're over 50, we recommend taking an annual hearing test for your hearing health. It costs nothing but time.

Hearing is our one and only field of expertise.

With over 80 clinics across Ireland, we have been caring for the hearing health of the nation for more than 35 years.

If you would like to have an honest conversation about your hearing health, we're all ears. Make an appointment for a free hearing consultation today by calling 1800 370 000 or visiting hiddenhearing.ie

1800 370 000
hiddenhearing.ie
Over 80 clinics nationwide

