

Hello Violspherians!

Thank you for coming to my talk! Here are the presentation slides.

A few take-away points:

- 1) Most hearing loss experienced as we age is due to deterioration of the sensory cells and subsequent nerve degeneration.
 - a. Health history and hereditary factors are important considerations.
 - b. Good habits for overall health (nutrition, exercise, management of stress and other chronic conditions) will benefit hearing and brain health.
- 2) Brain/Cognitive health and hearing health are correlated, and one will influence the other.
- 3) An individual's self-efficacy for their own well-being and the motivation to use a hearing aid will lead to improvements in an individual's ability to hear and understand speech (and music).
- 4) Hearing aids are amplification devices that can help an individual manage hearing problems experienced with age. This has a direct benefit and positive relationship to quality of life and the maintenance of an independent lifestyle.
- 5) Hearing aid settings can be optimized for speech and also for music, but the settings may be different from each other.
- 6) Audiologists provide counseling and rehabilitation services and work with clients to improve the motivation and self-efficacy for managing hearing loss. This includes determining the most suitable hearing aid for the individual's needs and optimizing hearing aid settings for speech and music.
 - a. Audiologists are allied-health professionals with doctoral degrees (Au.D.), are licensed (by the State) and credentialed by professional associations (American Speech-Language and Hearing Association and/or American Academy of Audiology).
- 7) The reasons why Medicare does not provide a hearing aid benefit are political (imagine that). Medicare benefits (or lack of) are determined by a byzantine set of regulations and the policy makers who are influenced by lobbyists for industry and the medical establishment.

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