

Second Opinion™



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You Can Hear Better

Too many people deny or try to hide the fact that they don't hear well, because they consider it a sign of aging. So they go through life missing much of what is said to them. That's a pity, because hearing loss can be improved. But the first step is to come out of the closet. (It's hard to hear anything in there anyway.) Here's what you need to know:

New advances are making hearing aids smaller, sleeker and easier to use. Ask a hearing specialist about these. (In those relatively few instances when the impairment is severe, cochlear implant surgery is almost always successful.)

**Don't
hesitate
to seek
help for
hearing
loss.**

The bad news is that hearing aids are expensive and, unfortunately, most insurance companies will not reimburse you for them. Neither will Medicare, although there is a bill (H.R. 1912) in Congress that could repeal this policy.

If you do get one, try it for at least a month (by law, there's a 30-day trial period). And temper your expectations: It won't correct your hearing the way glasses correct your vision. It can, however, amplify certain sounds so you can hear better. For more information on hearing loss, go to Parade.com.