

Hearing Loss - The Causes And How To Prevent It



Hearing loss (also known as "hearing impairment") may be either partial or total. A child may be born with this disability or it could develop later in life.

The Causes

There are a number of factors that can lead to hearing loss. The most common among them are:

Hereditary Disorders: This is caused by the inheritance of either the dominant or the recessive gene from the parents. Dominant genes account for approximately 75% of the cases and the recessive gene for approximately 25%.

Maternal Alcoholism: An excessive consumption of alcohol during pregnancy significantly increases the risk of hearing loss in the fetus.

Premature Birth: A premature child may develop hearing loss due to exposure to noise.

Aging: Advancing age is a major cause of hearing loss. A condition known as presbycusis makes the hearing of high frequency sounds difficult.

Noise: Exposure to loud noises causes hearing loss (in varying degrees) in approximately 5% of the global population. It may be from either continuous exposure to high decibel levels or a sharp sudden exposure such as being near an explosion.

Trauma: Physical injury to the ears can lead to hearing loss. Injury to the head may cause brain damage leading to messages from the ears not being interpreted even if the ears are completely functional.

Preventing Hearing Loss

Regular hearing checkups are the best way to avoid hearing loss. The earlier a problem is detected, the better the chances of treating it. Beyond that, there are a few general precautions that everyone should take:

Awareness of the causes of hearing loss: Knowledge of what can cause hearing loss, such as the exposure to loud noises, enables the avoidance of potentially dangerous situations.

Taking Protective measures: Those who are forced to spend time in high decibel environments, for work or other reasons, should use ear plugs or other suitable measures to avoid hearing loss. Working in places where employers do not abide by noise control regulations is unsafe.

Reduce controllable noises: Excessively high volume levels from headphones used with computers, personal music players etc. is a common cause of hearing disorders. Setting the volume high on music systems and TVs is another major cause. Keeping the volume level low will protect the ears.



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