



# HEARING LOSS IN FRIENDS AND FAMILY: HOW TO RECOGNIZE SYMPTOMS

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**Untreated hearing loss can have many negative consequences, such as a decline in general health, emotional well-being, and social isolation.**

More recently, studies have been investigating possible links with cognitive dysfunction, some of which even point towards the likelihood of untreated hearing loss as one of nine possible factors contributing to the risk of [dementia](#).

Below, Dr. Jenn Schumacher, audiologist for [ReSound US](#), outlines six signs of hearing loss to look out for in yourself or loved ones that suggest hearing aids could help to improve not just hearing, but also general well-being, longer-term health, and overall quality of life.

## 1. Asking others to repeat

Everyone can mishear things from time to time, but if you or your loved ones are constantly asking for things to be repeated or muttering the phrase “what did you say?” this could be a sign you’re lacking some of the sounds needed to process speech properly.

## 2. Complaining about mumbling

Those struggling with hearing loss often complain that people aren’t speaking clearly or are mumbling. This can be due to people with hearing loss not being able to hear high-pitched speech frequencies, which often provide the clarity and meaning of the word, making them feel like they can hear the sound but not fully understand it.

## 3. Difficulty with phone conversations

If you or your loved one has their phone volume set to the max volume possible or is having to use the speakerphone to hear what someone on the other end is saying, this could be a sign that they could benefit from hearing aids.

## 4. **Listening to the TV at a loud volume**

Television shows with fast-paced dialogue or a substantial amount of background noise can be hard for those with hearing loss to follow, as crucial dialogue can often be drowned out, leading to people listening to the TV at a much higher volume.

So, if you or a loved one need to have the TV volume turned up to a level of sound that is uncomfortable for others watching in the room to hear, this could be an indication of hearing loss.

## 5. **Appearing withdrawn, or becoming quiet**

Individuals with hearing loss often become quieter or can withdraw from social situations. Big gatherings of people are often busy and noisy, making it extra difficult to hear well. When it's difficult to hear properly, it can feel frustrating, exhausting or embarrassing to ask others to repeat themselves.

If you notice this behavior pattern starting to emerge in yourself or your loved one during these types of situations, consider that being social is one of the best ways to stay healthy throughout life, especially as we age. Better hearing helps support social ties and regain confidence in communicating with others.

## 6. **Exhaustion after socializing**

While it's normal to feel a bit tired after a long day of catching up with family or friends, if you or a loved one is feeling drained and exhausted after conversing with others, there could be more to it than simply needing a good night's sleep.

When a person isn't hearing all of the sounds of speech, the brain then has to fill in any gaps to help make sense of what people are saying. This requires a lot of extra focus and makes the brain work even harder to process what is going on in a busy situation, leading to extreme tiredness afterward.

## **How to get help?**

Treating hearing loss can not only improve the health of the person suffering but also those around them, having a dramatically positive effect on their social relationships and love life. That's why if you recognize a number of these signs in your loved one, it's time to seek the help of a [professional audiologist](#).

There are also [online hearing tests](#) for those not comfortable going straight to an audiologist, which can offer some further information on possible hearing difficulties and the best next steps to take to address them.