



spotlight on health

Enjoy The Sounds Of The Holidays

(NAPSA)—For many people, the holiday season is a time to celebrate and relax with family and friends.

However, for those living with hearing loss, it can also be a difficult and frustrating time. Large gatherings, music and the rapid pace of holiday activities all contribute to isolating those who have difficulty hearing.

In fact, the National Council on Aging found that adults who had untreated hearing loss were more likely to report feelings of depression and anxiety than those whose hearing loss had been treated.

“The holidays are often the only time of year that we get to see some of our long-distance family members,” said Dr. Craig Kasper, chief audiology officer for Audio Help Associates of Manhattan. “That is why family and friends should use the opportunity to discuss the issue of hearing loss with loved ones who may be at risk.”

If a loved one consistently asks you to repeat what you’ve said or is constantly turning up the volume on the television or radio, he or she may be experiencing hearing loss.

“Hearing problems that are ignored or untreated can get worse,” said Dr. Kasper. “If you notice any signs of hearing loss in a family member, you should speak to that person about making an appointment with a local audiologist.”

Hearing loss is the third-most common health issue in the United States, affecting more than 31 million Americans. Most people wait seven to 10 years before seeking help for hearing-related issues.



There are steps that families can take to ensure an enjoyable and relaxing holiday season for everyone, including a loved one with hearing loss.

Hear the World, a global initiative to raise awareness about the importance of hearing by hearing device manufacturer Phonak, suggests a few tips to cope with hearing loss during the holidays:

- Start new holiday traditions that are visually oriented, such as creating holiday lighting displays.
- Stay away from noisy venues when holding/throwing a holiday party.
- Avoid playing loud music, which can interfere with conversation, at gatherings.
- Arrange strategic seating assignments: Seat loved ones with hearing loss away from the bustling kitchen and far from any music speakers.
- Make a family New Year’s resolution to visit an audiologist for a hearing checkup.

For more information, visit www.hear-the-world.com. Visitors can participate in a free online hearing screening.