

Realistic Expectations

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Hearing technology has advanced significantly in recent years, offering more benefits to more people. Improved sound quality and comfort, miniaturization and increased automation have helped to make hearing instruments more acceptable and attractive to those who need them. However, as good as the technology and hearing care have become, they cannot replace normal hearing. And some patients might expect their hearing aids to do more than they are capable of doing. So, when pursuing hearing care, it is important to have realistic expectations in order to achieve the best level of communication.

There are a number of factors that can adversely affect one's satisfaction with amplification. These factors can include the type and degree of hearing loss, lifestyle, age and the level of technology selected. Also, the accuracy and thoroughness of the hearing evaluation, hearing instrument programming, verification testing and follow-up care are vital for success. Even in the most ideal conditions, getting adjusted to hearing aids can be a difficult transition for some.

In conclusion, being happy with one's hearing instruments hinges on several factors, including expectations. **The patient must realize the limitations of his or her hearing as well as the hearing technology. It is important to focus on the positives and try to build on these improvements with the help of the hearing care provider.** As long as the benefits of hearing aids outweigh any negative aspects, a foundation of success has been established. Typically, over time, amplified hearing will become one's new 'normal' hearing, providing more fulfilling communication and an improved quality of life.