

# HEARING LOSS? WHAT YOU CAN DO!

*Andrew R. Spector, MD and Laurie Cesati, M.Ed., CCC-A*

## MAY is BETTER HEARING and SPEECH MONTH!

*Learn more about hearing loss and treatment from the staff of the New Hampshire Hearing Institute.*

**Monday, May 19 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Elliot Hospital**

*Take advantage of this opportunity to ask questions about hearing loss and hearing aids.*

**D**o you frequently find yourself asking others to repeat themselves? Does it seem like everyone mumbles these days? Has the volume on your TV crept higher and higher? Have you wondered what that ringing sound is in your ears?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you're not alone. It is estimated that 28 million Americans have some degree of hearing loss. Even a mild hearing loss can impact one's ability to communicate and negatively impact quality of life.

There are many underlying causes of hearing loss. Some people are born with genetic hearing loss while others develop an age-related loss. Noise exposure from guns, loud music or even chronic exposure to less intense noise can contribute to decreased hearing – the iPod generation is very likely to exhibit loss in the future. Chronic ear infections, fluid in the ears, holes in the eardrum, poor movement of the hearing bones, and infrequently, tumors can also cause hearing loss.

Multiple complaints accompany hearing loss. Many people complain of ringing in their ears (tinnitus). Some report that their ears feel blocked, words are muffled, they experience pain with loud noises, or that it is difficult to understand conversations particularly in crowded places. Delayed speech and language development may be a clue to hearing loss in children.

Audiologists, like those at Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists of Southern New Hampshire, are highly skilled at assessing adult and pediatric hearing loss and helping patients rehabilitate

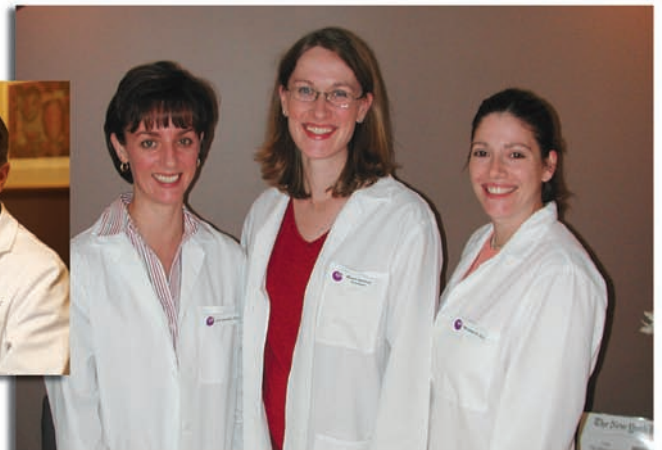
their hearing (typically with the use of individually fit hearing aids). It is imperative, however, to rule out an underlying medical disorder as a cause for your symptoms. Two steps are undertaken in order to diagnose and treat your hearing loss. First, you will undergo a medical examination to see if medications or surgery are required to fix the disorder. You will also have a 20-30 minute non-invasive hearing evaluation in a soundproof booth to determine the severity of your hearing loss.

Prevention is certainly the best medicine. In fact, 30 to 50% of hearing loss is preventable. Even if you already have hearing loss, there are steps that can be taken to minimize its progression. Whenever loud noise is anticipated – when mowing the lawn, going to a concert, or workplace exposure – protecting your ears with earplugs is mandatory. Also, keep the volume low when using earphones although, ideally, earphones should not be used at all to listen to music.

To learn more about hearing loss and hearing aids, call Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists of Southern New Hampshire at 622-3623 to schedule a medical and hearing evaluation. Our website is [www.entspecialistsnh.com](http://www.entspecialistsnh.com).



*Board certified otolaryngologists (l to r), Drs. James Bartels, Andrew Spector and Jeffrey Zimmerman, plus John Stallman, PA-C, are committed to providing the highest quality medical or surgical treatment for your hearing loss.*



*Our audiologists (l to r), Laurie Cesati, M.Ed., CCC-A, Alison Nardone, M.S., CCC-A and Karen Lukeman, M.S., CCC-A are dedicated to improving your quality of life by assessing and determining the degree of hearing loss and your candidacy for hearing aids.*