

HEARING

Need to Knows provide older adults and their families with important information to enhance their hospital or nursing home stays. Communication and teamwork are important aspects of high-quality healthcare. The individual, family, and caregivers are vital members of the team.

Why is it important?

When hearing loss occurs, it can become difficult to communicate. The most common type of hearing loss among older adults is loss of ability to hear high-frequency sounds. Hearing loss may be caused by aging or exposure to loud noises over a lifetime. Challenges to hearing can include non-functioning hearing aids and background noise.

What you can do:

Make sure your hearing aid is clean and has working batteries.

Ask your healthcare provider to make sure your ears are free of earwax.

Request use of a pocket amplifier when hearing aids are not available.

Request an amplifier for your telephone.

Let people know if you cannot understand them. Ask them to talk slower and in a lower tone of voice.

Turn off the TV or the radio to decrease background noise.

What the family and caregivers can do:

Tell healthcare providers if your loved one hears better on one side.

Ask healthcare providers to write down important information.

Request the use of pictures or communication tools.

Make sure medication directions are provided in written form.