

## Hearing Aid Maintenance

To minimise the need for repairs and to preserve the life of your hearing aids, a regular and thorough maintenance program is essential. Your hearing aids are highly sophisticated devices worn in the ear canal where moisture and wax are present. The deeper your hearing aid sits in your ear canal, the more likely it is to be affected by moisture and wax. If a hearing aid is not maintained properly, wax and moisture damage can lead to:

- a gradual or sudden loss of volume.
- a reduction in the clarity of high frequency sounds so that they appear muffled or distorted.
- whistle or feedback.
- cutting out altogether.

To avoid any of these changes in the performance of your hearing aids, please bring them in regularly to be checked/cleaned. At Dineen & Westcott Audiologists, we have a vacuum suction cleaning device, which will thoroughly clean your hearing aid. We recommend that you bring your hearing aid in every 3 months or so to be cleaned in this way. No appointment is needed to do this, and we provide this service to our clients free of charge. Wax guards, filters, tubing and ear moulds for behind-the-ear hearing aids need to be replaced regularly, and this can be checked while your hearing aids are being cleaned. There are minor charges for these parts after the warranty period has expired. We will advise you if your hearing aid needs to be sent back to the manufacturer for repair, and may be able to loan you a hearing aid to tide you over while you wait for it to be returned.

### A maintenance program should include the following:

1. Store your hearing aids, when not being worn, in your Dri-aid kit to absorb any accumulated moisture. The crystals in the metal container should be dark blue. When they appear pale/pink, place the metal container in the oven, as indicated by the instructions on the outer container.
2. Wipe your hearing aids with a tissue or cloth when you remove them from your ear. Examine them closely to see if you need to use your cleaning tools to remove wax or debris from the earphone (where the amplified sound leaves your hearing aid), the microphone and the air vent, if present.
3. Use your cleaning tools carefully – do not damage your hearing aids by cleaning too vigorously.
4. Do not get your hearing aids wet. They need to be removed before taking a bath, shower or a swim. They should also be removed at the hairdressers and before using hairspray.
5. Keep your hearing aids in a cool, dry place, away from children and dogs! Hearing aids seem to be attractive to dogs, and it is not uncommon for a hearing aid to be brought in for repair or replacement as a result of being chewed by a dog.
6. Don't wear your hearing aids if you are sleeping or if you have an ear infection.
7. The regular use of hearing aids can result in a build up of wax in the ear canals. We will check for this at your regular reviews, but we recommend that you ask your doctor to check your ears between reviews to remove any wax build up present.

## Batteries

You will be provided with batteries when you are fitted with your hearing aids. When they run out, you will need to purchase your own batteries. Make sure you buy fresh batteries of the correct size for your hearing aids. Stale batteries will have a reduced life and may result in poor performance from your hearing aids. We stock high quality batteries, and with our high turnover, they are always fresh. If you are unable to come in to purchase batteries, we will post them to you.

Did you know that.....  
Hearing aid batteries are colour-coded ?  
Blue, orange, yellow or brown.  
Just let us know which colour you need!!

## Other useful extras

**Battery tester:** Most contemporary hearing aids let you know when your battery needs to be replaced. As a back-up, we supply a battery tester when you are fitted with your hearing aids. Hold the battery in position for 15 seconds to ensure that you have a viable battery. A red light will illuminate if the battery is O.K.

**Wax cleaning mechanisms:** Some hearing aids are fitted with wax cleaning mechanisms. Make sure that you check these daily, as instructed at your fitting appointment. Wax hooks are available to remove wax from your earphone.

**Ear mould puffer:** For behind-the-ear hearing aids. We use specialised dry tubing in our ear moulds, but if you notice condensation in your tubing, a puffer can remove it, once you have separated your mould from the hearing aid.

**Wax softening drops** can be used if the wax in your ear canals has become hard or impacted. The wax may then become dislodged. Often, the drops simply soften the wax and it still needs to be removed by your general practitioner or Ear, Nose and Throat specialist.

## Hearing Aid Troubleshooting Checklist

### Aid Dead:

- Is there a battery in the hearing aid?
- Is the battery fresh?
- Is the battery inserted correctly?
- Is there any wax blockage in the receiver tube?
- Is the microphone clear?

### Aid working but weak:

- Is there any wax blockage in the receiver tube?
- Is the microphone clear?
- Is there any moisture in the tubing? (for behind the ear style hearing aids)

### Can hear static, but no amplification:

- Possible receiver/microphone damage, needs servicing

Getting feedback (whistling/screeching):

- Are you inserting the aid/mould correctly?
- Is there any wax blockage in the receiver tube?
- Do you have a wax build-up in your ears?
- Is the mould/shell old? (may need to be remade)
- Is the mould/shell cracked or split?

These are some of the most common hearing aid problems. If any of them occur and you are unable to rectify the problem yourself with your cleaning tools etc, or if you are just not too sure, you may call us on 94576588, or drop in to have our reception staff check the hearing aid for you. An appointment is not necessary for this service.