

## WHO HAS SEEN THE WIND?

*Who has seen the wind?*

*Neither I nor you:*

*But when the leaves hang trembling,  
The wind is passing through.*

*Who has seen the wind?*

*Neither you nor I:*

*But when the trees bow down their heads,  
The wind is passing by.*

*-Christina Rossetti*

A simple poem illustrates the effect of the wind... an invisible force, yet one that can have devastating effects. Hearing loss, especially when untreated, can be like the wind—having a negative impact on a person's life.

Hearing loss is a dulled sense. The ear's role in hearing is to react to sounds in the environment and send information to the brain. The brain interprets this information and completes the process of hearing. When the system functions normally we hear and understand with precision, especially while we are young. Impaired hearing causes this system to break down and the effects of aging compound the problem.

Hearing loss is the most common sensory impairment affecting individuals aged 75 and older and is becoming more prevalent as people live longer due to improved health care. When hearing is lost, more effort is required of the brain to process the incomplete information received from the ear. We may try to compensate by relying more on information from our other senses. When a sound occurs but no additional sensory information is available, we may

not even realize we missed something. This lack of awareness can separate us from people and things around us. Long or in-depth conversations may be avoided, and over time barriers to communication can lead to strained relationships and limit interactions. Thus, hearing loss can have a significant impact on our quality of life.

Thankfully we can choose to improve our hearing situation with today's modern hearing aid technology and changed communication habits. When hearing challenges are significantly reduced, a sense of independence can be regained. We can be more involved in conversations and feel a return to our "old selves."



*“We can't control the wind, but we  
can adjust our sails.”*

*- Thomas Monson*

## OUR PATIENTS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

No one can describe the implications of hearing loss better than our patients. We asked several of them to share their experiences with hearing loss and hearing aids. Their comments are rich and insightful. Excerpts of their experiences are below. *We invite you to read their full stories by visiting our North Office for a copy or on the Resident Intranet.*

### Hearing loss affects people of any age and can be caused by a myriad of reasons.

Cy, age 87, is a retired attorney and circuit court judge. He has severe hearing loss that has several causes, including an incident with a firecracker as a child, hunting, and his military service.

Ted is 55 years old and first noticed he was having difficulty hearing as a teenager. He initially attributed it to listening to loud music and exposure to loud noises. In reality it was a direct residual of undetected heredity kidney disease.



Carol is currently 86 years old and retired from the communications field. She initially sought help for her husband Bob who then wore hearing aids for many years. She later sought help for her own hearing loss.

### Hearing loss has a major impact on our life and quality of life, and relationships. People are motivated to reach out for many different reasons.

Early in Cy's career as an attorney, he was able to compensate in the courtroom by moving closer to people in order to better hear them. After a courtroom renovation he was in for a shock. He could no longer move around the courtroom to get in a better hearing position. He sought help from an audiologist right away.

Ted had a great deal of difficulty hearing the voices of women and children. He used to dread going to any type of appointment where he faced the prospect of waiting to hear his name called out by the staff. However, tinnitus was what ultimately prompted him to seriously consider hearing aids when he was 35 years old.



Carol realized how significant her hearing loss was when people started wearing medical masks and face coverings, and she could no longer rely on reading their faces.

### Hearing aids do not cure or eradicate hearing loss, but they can provide a vast improvement. Our patients describe their experiences and offer their advice.

Cy's points out that it takes time to adjust to wearing hearing aids. He says that sometimes people expect too much from hearing aids, get disappointed, and stop using them.

Ted states that hearing aids do not replace normal hearing, just as glasses or contacts are not the same as having perfect vision. "Rather than focusing on what my hearing aids 'can't do,' I prefer to enjoy and appreciate what they 'can do.' Simply put, it was some of the best money I have ever spent!" he says. Carol recounts that "It took a few days to learn to seat them properly in my ears. After a week or two, putting

them in became part of my morning routine, as did taking them out at night." She summarizes, "Improved hearing has made it possible for me to participate more fully in the things I enjoy. It allows me to focus and contribute to an extent I couldn't before."

### For people considering improving their hearing with hearing aids, Ted and Carol offered advice.

Ted says "I would encourage anyone who is thinking about getting hearing aids to do so. If you have a desire to enhance your own quality of life, and an understanding that hearing aids are a 'treatment' for hearing loss and not a 'cure,' then you will be delighted with the decision to purchase them."

Carol offers "Don't think of the need for hearing aids as a disability. Embrace them as a gift of modern technology and a gift to your loved ones. Don't try them half way. Be committed to wearing them at home and in public. The more you get used to how they sound and feel, the more they can become your new normal.



Dr. Heather Eck & Dr. Kerry Herrmann

## SERVING YOU

Our approach is centered on education so you can make the best decision for yourself.

- Complimentary Screenings, Full Evaluations, and Medical Referrals (if indicated)
- Consultations with a discussion of various options
- New hearing aid purchases
- Adjustments to and servicing of current hearing aids
- Use of insurance benefits and discounted pricing

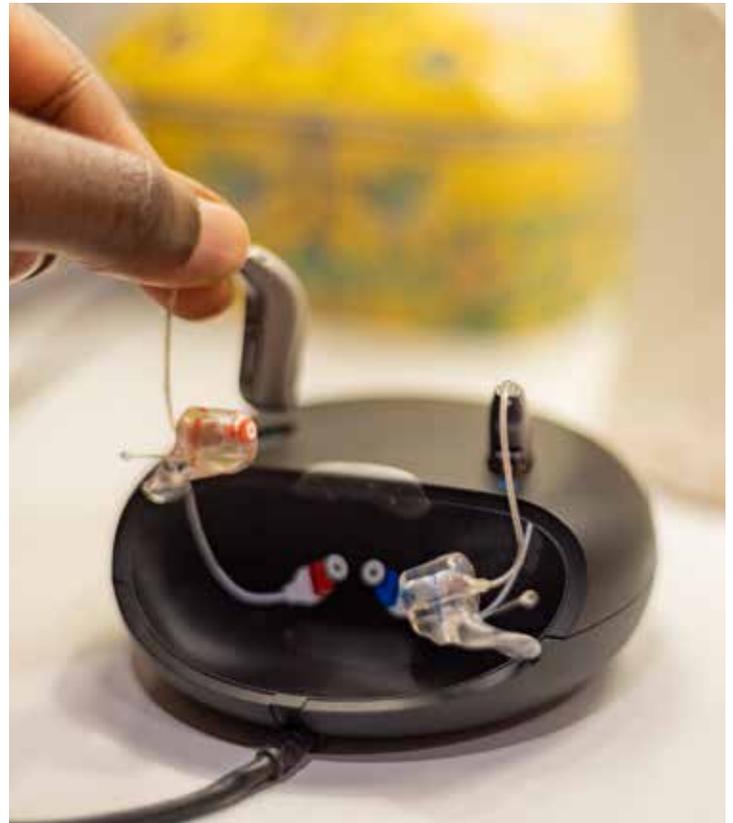
We offer you solutions and support your decision. We look forward to serving you.

## JOIN US ON A QUEST FOR BETTER HEARING, BETTER HEALTH, AND A BETTER LIFE.

We are accepting new patients by appointment, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If you would like to schedule an appointment for our services—from something as simple as a baseline, complimentary screening to having us take over your care or maximize the benefits of your current hearing aids—it starts with a simple phone call to **717.464.6411** for an appointment at either of our locations.

We look forward to meeting you!



### North Office

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