

Good Hearing Keeps Your Brain Fit

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Hearing health is brain health. Our brain is the most important tool in our body. Keeping it in tip top condition is vital for our physical and mental health. Research shows that living with untreated hearing loss can have an impact on the brain and can lead to serious problems in life, such as increased risk of Dementia*. Leading hearing aid manufacturer, Oticon, is leading the charge to support the brain in the right way to eliminate the consequences of hearing loss.

Copenhagen, Denmark, Aug 20th, 2020 – Did you know that a hearing problem can turn into a brain problem, which can lead to serious problems in life? This is because the brain undergoes stress when it is not provided with enough of the information it needs to make sense of sound which is detrimental to how it works and to its health. We hear with our brain, not our ears. And now new research from Oticon shows that if our brain isn't provided access to as much sound as possible, such as we experience with hearing loss, it cannot work at its best. The research also reveals that simply making certain sounds louder, the way many traditional hearing aids try to improve hearing, isn't the right solution for anyone with hearing loss. This is because this method does not provide the vital stimulation from all sounds which the brain needs to stay fit.

Why a hearing problem turns into a life problem

Oticon (<http://www.oticon.global/>), has repeatedly proven that the brain plays the most important role for hearing, coining the term 'BrainHearing™'. New hearing science research from Oticon, delves even deeper and demonstrates that the brain is able to focus on the sounds we choose and switch attention much better if it has access to all relevant sound. If your brain doesn't get the sound information it needs via your ears, it has to work harder to focus on what's important. This extra effort has many consequences: it can age the brain more quickly, change the way the brain works and lead to more incidences of fall-related injuries, fatigue, stress, social isolation and depression. The consequences of living with untreated hearing loss even include significantly increased risk of dementia – up to 5 times as much as people with normal hearing. The evidence is clear, good hearing actually helps to keep your brain fit so that you can get on with life without interruption by hearing loss consequences.

"Addressing a hearing problem in the right way promotes healthy ageing and significantly decreases the potential for life problems," says Thomas Behrens, Chief audiologist, Oticon. "If you have a hearing loss, your hearing aids need to deliver your brain the right information to allow it to work optimally. New information about how we hear, shows our brain is constantly working to both create a full overview of the entire soundscape and focus. If the full overview or sound picture is not provided, then the brain cannot focus well enough and has to work harder. This reveals that most hearing aids, which concentrate on focusing on particular sounds, are actually starving the brain of all the information it needs to hear naturally. We are really proud to be innovators of hearing technologies that support the brain and ultimately eliminate the consequences of hearing loss and will continue to lead the charge to better hearing health with our ongoing BrainHearing research."

For more information about Oticon BrainHearing™ visit:

<https://www.oticon.global/hearing-aid-users/hearing-loss/understand-hearing-loss/how-hearing-works>

*Lin, F. R., Metter, E. J., O'Brien, R. J., Resnick, S. M., Zonderman, A. B., & Ferrucci, L. (2011). Hearing loss and incident dementia. Archives of neurology, 68(2), 214-220.

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About Oticon

500 million people worldwide suffer from hearing loss. The majority are over the age of 50 while eight percent are under the age of 18. Oticon's vision is to create a world where people are no longer limited by hearing loss. A world where hearing aids fit seamlessly into life and help people realise their full potential, while avoiding the health consequences of hearing loss. Oticon develops and manufactures hearing aids for both adults and children and supports every kind of hearing loss from mild to profound and we pride ourselves on developing some of the most innovative hearing aids in the market. Headquartered in Denmark, we are a global company and part of Demant with more than 15,000 employees and revenues of over DKK 14 billion. Changing technology. Changing conventions. Changing lives. Oticon – Life-changing hearing technology. www.oticon.global

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