

# IT'S A NOISY WORLD... PROTECT YOUR HEARING.

Whether you're on or off duty, it's important to follow healthy hearing practices. Here are a few rules of thumb to help protect and preserve your hearing:

**KNOW THE NOISE LEVELS.** Educate yourself about hazardous noise and learn how to detect dangerous noise levels. For example, lawn mowers, power tools, motorcycles, and weapons all have hazardous noise levels. When using these items, know when to wear hearing protection devices to safeguard your ears. A good rule of thumb is: if you have to raise your voice to be heard by someone who is an arm's length away, the noise level is probably hazardous. There are a number of mobile applications and hand-held sound level meters available that can help you monitor exposure levels.

**TURN DOWN THE VOLUME.** When using your personal listening device, turn down the volume to a "safe" listening level: below 85 decibels. If you have the volume at a loud — but not uncomfortable level — and can still hear conversations in the room, it's a safe level.

**REDUCE EXPOSURE.** Limit your amount of time and exposure to high levels of noise whenever possible. This may require wearing hearing protection to remain in a noisy environment.

**WEAR HEARING PROTECTION.** From continual loud noise, such as lawnmowers, to loud impulse noises, such as weapons fire, it's important that you use and properly wear hearing protection devices.



**GIVE YOUR EARS A REST.** If you're using a personal listening device, attending a concert, or spending time in a noisy environment, give your ears some "quiet time" to rest.

Remember, caring properly for your ears is the best way to have continued hearing health. Check with your audiologist or healthcare provider for the type of hearing protection device that best suits your individual needs.

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## Hearing is a basic sense needed to accomplish any mission.

In the military, good hearing is critical. It's a key survival sense for all service members. Sound may be the first signal you receive before contact with an enemy. Hearing is a basic sense needed to accomplish any mission.

As with all of our senses, hearing can be taken for granted ... until it becomes damaged or impaired. A hearing injury can disrupt communication and affect your ability to carry out your mission. Hearing loss can compromise your safety — and the safety of those around you — if your ability to receive, identify, and respond to commands and warning signals is reduced.

The results of your hearing loss can be wide-ranging — both at work and at home.

### HEARING IS ESSENTIAL FOR:

- Developing relationships and connecting with your friends and family
- Fully participating in team and community activities
- Experiencing events that shape your quality of life

### HEARING LOSS HAS ALSO BEEN LINKED TO:

- Feelings of social isolation
- Irritability and anger
- Diminished overall health
- Symptoms of depression

Given the links between safety, mission accomplishment, health, and quality of life, your hearing is a crucial sense that must be protected.

# HEARING LOSS IS SENSELESS... AND PREVENTABLE



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