

KEEP

LISTENING

EDUCATE, INFORM AND NORMALIZE

Educate, inform and normalize. These are the actions to break down misconceptions about hearing problems. Going to the ophthalmologist and buying a pair of glasses is custom, as is a checkup at the dentist showing the need for braces. Hearing devices, now hypertechnological and attractively designed, are often considered a source of discomfort. Young people are ashamed to wear hearing protectors at nightclubs albeit they normally use earbuds. Around hypoacusis - the lowering of hearing which can result, in the long run, in a permanent loss - there is still little information. Spreading the "culture of hearing" also means conveying the importance of taking small daily actions to improve our hearing, on which our everyday lives depend. Act today to avoid problems tomorrow.

Just take a hearing test.

Five tips to promote responsible listening and a culture of hearing

TESTING AS A FORM OF PREVENTION

1

A hearing test is essential not only when the "damage" is done. In the collective imagination, hearing testing is not viewed in the same way as a checkup at the dentist or ophthalmologist, but in reality, the logic is the same. Recognizing the onset of hearing loss right away can be crucial: in the long run, our brains may unlearn to detect the right sound. In addition, according to a study published in *The Lancet*, hearing loss causes 8 percent of dementia cases. However, an audiometric test performed at age 30 or 40 may protect against neurodegenerative diseases of the brain.

CAPS AND PAUSES

2

Often the decibel level during a concert or club night exceeds 110 or 120. In such cases, there are two things to do: wear hearing protectors - easy to wear and clean, and anti-allergenic - and take regular breaks of 15 minutes or so, taking refuge in a quieter area of the venue (away from the speakers). Musicians who have always been careful to protect their most important organ, the ear, regularly use hearing protectors.

THE 60-60 RULE

3

A few good habits when we use headphones connected to smartphones or computers: take advantage of the "psychoacoustic" settings on the device; set the volume to no more than 60 percent of maximum capacity for no more than 60 consecutive minutes; vary the mode of listening to the sound (some with and some without headphones), giving the ear the proper recovery time.

SAFE SWIMMING

4

Earplugs for the pool or sea are essential to prevent ear infections, among the causes of hearing loss. These devices - increasingly less bulky - can be standard (so that they fit the shape of the external ear canal) or custom-made.

THE RIGHT HEADPHONES

5

Often, when we are disturbed by outside noise, we are inclined to turn up the volume of our earphones to the maximum to isolate ourselves and listen to something else. Noise-reducing headphones can mitigate background sound by up to 92 percent and are most useful when, at home or in the office, we are disturbed by the activities of neighbors, coworkers, or housemates (loud music, vacuuming, videocalls). Bone-conduction headphones are also great in that they do not damage the eardrums or obstruct the ear canal.

THE CULTURE OF HEARING

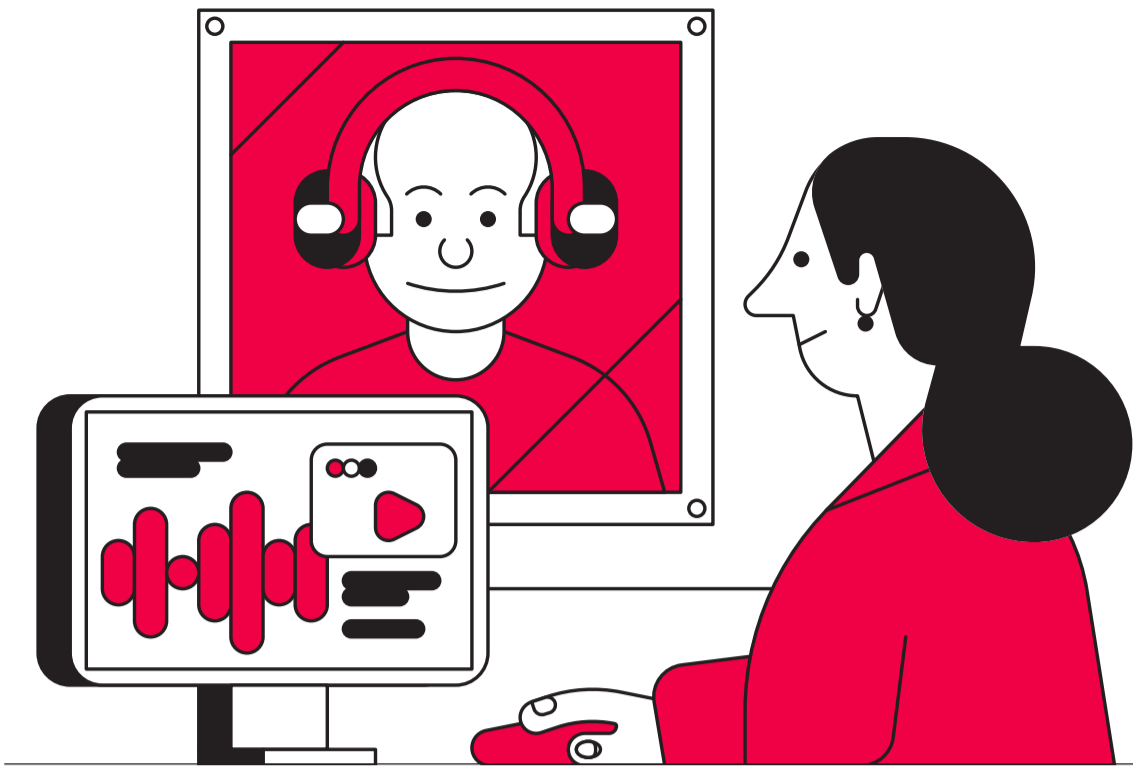
**DECLINE IN HEARING IS PHYSIOLOGICAL
AND NOT TO BE DEMONIZED:
ONE IN THREE PEOPLE AFTER AGE 60
SUFFER FROM HYPOACUSIS.**

**TESTING TO REDUCE THE SERIOUS
CONSEQUENCES OF HEARING LOSS
IS QUICK, EASY, A PIECE OF CAKE.**

**KNOWING YOUR HEARING AND
PROTECTING IT THROUGH A HEALTHY
LIFESTYLE IS THE BEST ATTITUDE
TO GUARD AGAINST HEARING LOSS.**

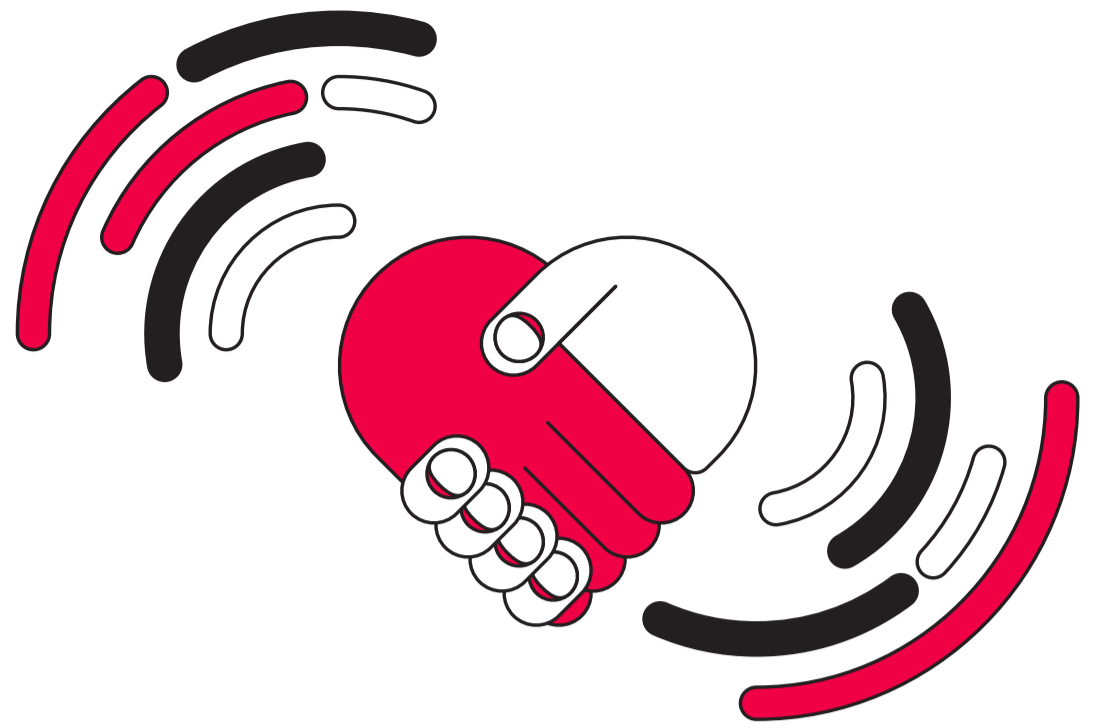
**TALK TO ALL AGE GROUPS:
ONE BILLION YOUNG PEOPLE ARE AT RISK
OF PREVENTABLE HEARING LOSS.**

**INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY CREATES THE
FOUNDATION FOR RESPONSIBLE LISTENING.**



THE PROFESSION YOU DON'T EXPECT

A little-known but increasingly in-demand health profession: hearing aid specialists who choose the most appropriate hearing care solutions, identifying pathways tailored to the person's needs. They are not only concerned with studying and fitting the most appropriate hearing aids but also in implementing rehabilitation and/or prevention programs for hearing impairments. This is a profoundly evolving profession, even given the increased use of new technologies (Amplifon, for example, has developed a hearing test via iPad and created an app to facilitate dialogue even at a distance between hearing care professional and patient). According to the WHO, by 2050, one in four people will encounter a form of hearing loss. In short, the figure of the hearing care professional is set to become increasingly relevant.



AMPLIFON AND HEARING WELLNESS

Founded in Milan in 1950, Amplifon is concerned with the application and sale of various hearing care solutions. It is active in 25 countries with 9,300 specialized centers and more than 19,400 employees and collaborators representing more than 100 different nationalities. More than 70 percent of employees are women and the average age is under 40. The company has annual revenues of more than 2 billion euros and is listed on the Milan Stock Exchange. A signatory to the United Nations Global Compact, the company also promotes awareness and prevention activities on the importance of hearing well-being through its sustainability goals. Thanks to its rechargeable devices, in 2022, Amplifon helped save about 194 million batteries that would otherwise have been used by customers and has a goal of saving more than 200 million batteries annually by 2023. Moreover, Amplifon allowed for an estimated global saving of almost 300 million euros a year through free hearing tests.

Finally, through the "Listen Responsibly" program, it emphasizes the underestimated link between excessive noise and damage to ear health. An integral part of the project is an app that, through the use of a noise tracker and users' inputs, generates a map of noise pollution in our cities.

Five myths that need to be dispelled to fight misconceptions around hearing care

IT'S NOT ONLY ABOUT AGE

1

We often think that hearing care is a problem only for the elderly, but, according to the WHO, almost 50 percent of people aged 12 to 35 are at risk of hearing loss. According to recent research by Alzheimer's Research UK, the first hearing tests should take place as early as 30 to 40 years of age. However, according to the EuroTrak 2022 report, most hearing device users feel they have waited too long. In addition, the initial checkup is no guarantee of immediate action: it is usually at least three years before concrete action is taken.

All it takes is a hearing test!

A CONDITION TO BE NORMALIZED

2

Hearing loss is a common condition. In the collective imagination it is unfairly conceived as a sign of advancing age, and because of this it can create discomfort. About 10 percent of the world's population suffers from it. Hypoacusis does not mean sudden deafness: like myopia, it manifests slowly and progressively. It is a problem that can be prevented and mitigated through various therapeutic solutions.

All it takes is a hearing test!

HAVE STYLE WITHOUT FEAR

3

No one, or almost no one, is ashamed to wear eyeglasses, designed as accessories that can complement our look. However, for hearing devices – which have an increasingly minimal and hi-tech design – it is not the same. They are associated with disability and old age. Instead, they are small, comfortable, modern, easy to use and connect to TV and smartphones. In Europe, the rate of use of hearing devices is 40 percent: a significant figure, but still not satisfactory.

All it takes is a hearing test!

IT DEPENDS (A LOT) ON US

4

Half of all cases of hearing loss can be prevented through public health measures, the WHO explains. However, hearing care remains in our hands: we are not at the mercy of events, and it is often enough to have a test at a young age to avoid annoying damage. Hearing impairment is not only due to genetic predisposition and old age but is also caused by noise exposure and unhealthy lifestyles.

All it takes is a hearing test!

THESE ARE NOT HARMLESS NOISES

5

Noise-induced hearing loss is caused not only by very loud sounds but also by prolonged exposure to high sound intensities (over 85 decibels) that seem harmless. According to the WHO, 40 percent of the population in the 12-35 age group is exposed to potentially harmful sound levels during evenings in clubs and discos, while the category most at risk is workers in certain industries.

All it takes is a hearing test!