



Communication strategies for adults with hearing loss

- Obtain the hearing impaired person's attention by saying their names before beginning a conversation.
- Face the hearing impaired person directly and try to ensure sufficient lighting.
- Most hearing impaired people have greater difficulty understanding speech when there is background noise. Try to minimize extraneous noise when talking. Take turns speaking and avoid interrupting others.
- Speak clearly, slowly, distinctly, but naturally, without shouting or exaggerating mouth movements.
- Try to avoid "trailing off," or decreasing volume at the end of a sentence.
- If there is difficulty understanding a particular phrase or word, try to find a different way of saying the same thing rather than repeating the original words over and over.
- Be sure the hearing impaired person knows the topic of conversation so that the right words come to mind. Clue him or her in when the subject of conversation changes.
- If you are giving specific information - such as time, place or phone numbers - have the listener repeat the specifics back to you. Many numbers and words sound alike.
- Recognize that everyone, especially the hard-of-hearing, has a harder time hearing and understanding when stressed, ill or tired.