

The link between hearing loss and dementia

The bad news: Hearing loss can significantly increase the risk of developing dementia, recent medical research has shown (December 2017).

The good news: The research also shows that getting help with hearing loss, e.g. hearing aids, can help to prevent or delay dementia.

What can you do to look after your Ear Health?

- **Listen to music safely** – If loud music has made your ears ring or feel a bit dull, e.g. after listening on your smartphone, you could be at risk of noise-induced hearing loss or permanent tinnitus.
- **Noise at work** - If you have a noisy job your employer must take steps to protect your hearing, including ear protection
- **Protect children's hearing** - Children's ears are more sensitive to high-pitched sounds than adults.
- **Ear wax build up** - Earwax protects ears from dirt and germs. In older people wax becomes drier. For advice, check out the NHS Choices website or speak to a pharmacist about self-management, such as ear drops that can dissolve wax. Never use cotton-wool buds, etc. as this pushes earwax deeper and cause an ear infection.

So, if you have difficulty hearing, e.g. have to turn the TV volume up or have to ask people to repeat themselves, it makes sense to seek help, without delay. You can check your hearing with a simple test online at <https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/hearing-health/check-your-hearing/>