

YOUR HEARING AIDS, YOUR HEARING AID CLINIC, AND YOU



WORK SAFE BC

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
worksafebc.com

Contact information

If you have questions regarding this brochure or the release form, please contact:

WorkSafeBC Health Care Services

Lower Mainland: 604 232-7787

Toll-free: 1 866 244-6404

If you have questions regarding the Hearing Aid Program or the status of a claim, please contact:

WorkSafeBC

Lower Mainland: 604 231-8888

Toll-free: 1 888 967-5377

For general questions about your hearing aids, please contact your hearing aid clinic or WorkSafeBC at the number above.

For more information on the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, please contact:

WorkSafeBC FIPP Office

Lower Mainland: 604 279-8171

Toll-free: 1 866 266-9405

Your hearing aid clinic will:

- Help you choose hearing aids
- Help you understand what hearing aids are capable of doing, as well as their limitations
- Demonstrate how to put on your hearing aids and how to use the controls
- Adjust the hearing aids as necessary
- Teach you how to maintain your hearing aids
- Provide you and your family with tips on how to improve your communication
- Provide you with information about local services and support groups for people with hearing loss

Please contact your hearing aid clinic whenever you're having trouble with your hearing aids. Your clinic is permitted to contact you for follow-up for one year after you receive your hearing aids. After one year, you should contact the clinic if you have any concerns.

Your hearing aid clinic has asked you to sign a "Personal Information Release Consent" form because they must send your name and claim number to a hearing aid manufacturer when ordering or repairing your hearing aid(s). By signing this form you have given permission to release this information and are aware that many manufacturers store this information outside Canada, which could possibly be accessed pursuant to the laws of another country.

Your hearing aid clinic has asked you to provide your Personal Health Number (PHN). This information is required for billing purposes by WorkSafeBC.

PERSONAL INFORMATION RELEASE CONSENT

In 2004, the *British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* was changed to restrict the sharing of personal information outside Canada.

However, in order to purchase your hearing aid(s), your hearing aid clinic is required to submit some of your personal information (your name and claim number) to the hearing aid manufacturer so they can invoice and provide warranties to WorkSafeBC (the Workers' Compensation Board). Many hearing aid manufacturers have European or American ownership, which means this information may be stored and possibly accessed outside Canada pursuant to the laws of those countries.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that WorkSafeBC and the hearing aid clinic have informed you of the risk of the disclosure of your personal information, and that you give consent to the hearing aid clinic to provide your name and claim number to the hearing aid manufacturer(s).

Worker first name	Worker last name	WorkSafeBC claim number
Signature		Date (yyy-mm-dd)

Personal information on this form is collected for the purposes of administering a worker's compensation claim by WorkSafeBC in accordance with the *Workers' Compensation Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. For further information about the collection of personal information, please contact WorkSafeBC's Freedom of Information Coordinator at PO Box 2310 5th Terminal, Vancouver BC, V6B 3W5, or telephone 604 279-8171.

Choosing a hearing aid

An audiologist or hearing instrument practitioner at your hearing aid clinic will discuss different kinds of hearing aids to help you choose the appropriate style. They will take into account your communication needs, lifestyle, type of hearing loss, ear shape, and cosmetic preferences.

Hearing aids help you hear better, not perfectly

- Remember that hearing aids will not give you back normal hearing. Hearing aids cannot fix the damage to your inner ear's hair cells, therefore your ear will always have some difficulty processing sounds.
- Hearing aids will not eliminate background noise.
- Adjusting to a hearing aid takes time — practise listening in a variety of environments to get used to hearing different sounds.

Trial period/adjustment period

A hearing aid will bring back sounds you haven't heard in a long time, therefore your brain needs time to adapt.

Regardless of the type of hearing aids you try, remember that your hearing aid clinic should offer you a two-month trial to allow you to adapt. This trial period is important because if you aren't satisfied with the hearing aids, you may return them.

As you try out your new hearing aids, keep the following in mind:

- You might be temporarily disturbed by background sounds
- You'll get better at ignoring or not noticing competing sounds as your brain adapts
- You should slowly increase the time you wear the aids
- You should expect your tolerance for loud sounds to increase slowly
- You should gradually increase the number of situations in which you use your hearing aids
- Active daily use of your hearing aids is necessary for adaptation to sound

Visit your hearing aid clinic frequently during the trial period. You'll likely require several visits to get the most comfortable and effective fit.

If you feel the hearing aids are still not beneficial, return them to the practitioner within the two-month trial period. This will not affect any future entitlement to hearing aids under your WorkSafeBC claim.

Tips to help you communicate better

Your hearing aid clinic will review strategies to help you communicate more easily. Here are a few tips:

- Communicate in a room with low background noise
- Face the person you are talking with
- Move closer to the speaker
- Let the person know you have hearing loss

Maintenance

Your hearing aid clinic will explain how to use and care for your hearing aids so they will function well and remain in good repair. Here are a few things to remember:

- Turn off your hearing aids when you are not using them
- Keep your hearing aids in their protective container when not in use
- Use the wax guard, if provided
- Keep hearing aids away from heat and moisture
- Replace dead batteries immediately
- Don't apply hair care products while wearing hearing aids
- Clean hearing aids regularly as instructed
- See your hearing aid clinic if you're experiencing problems

Batteries

Your hearing aid clinic must provide you with an appropriate number of batteries to last a minimum of six months. Please note that different hearing aids will consume batteries at different rates. Please contact WorkSafeBC Health Care Services if you do not receive a six-month supply.

For optimal effectiveness, hearing aids must be powered with the maximum-strength battery available for that hearing aid. Replace dead batteries immediately.

