

Think about what you're saying:

- Does the listener understand the topic, know what's being discussed?
- Is the vocabulary familiar?
- Is the listener apprised when the subject is changed?
- Can you use key words or rephrase the message?



In general:

- Keep extra hearing aid batteries in a re-closeable, plastic bag along with instructions on how to replace the batteries and a copy of the business card of the person's audiologist
- Assist the person with putting in their hearing aids, cochlear implants or other devices
- Be sure that other caregivers, family members or supervisors know where the person keeps his or her hearing aids when they are not being worn

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Hearing Loss: WHAT CAREGIVERS SHOULD KNOW

Caring for a patient who is hard of hearing can be a difficult experience. Communication becomes more challenging when you have to repeat yourself or you may feel ignored or misunderstood.

For the patient with hearing loss, they can become frustrated and discouraged trying to understand. They don't hear the way they used to, so they may start to feel left out of conversations, cut off and even isolated.



Here are some helpful communication hints to ease frustration for both the caregiver and the patient with hearing loss

Just because someone wears a hearing aid does not mean that he or she hears normally. Often, the person can hear but cannot understand what's being said.

When you are speaking:

- Be sure you have the listener's attention
- Face the person, do not speak with your back turned or from another room
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Pause now and again to give the listener a chance to catch up
- Do not chew gum or food while you are speaking
- Keep objects, such as fingers and pencils, away from your mouth and face
- Be patient and smile
- If you wear a mask, remove it before talking



- Be aware that saying “never mind,” “forget it,” or “I’ll tell you later” is hurtful
- Keep a pad and pen nearby for writing messages back and forth
- Offer clues to accompany your words, such as gesturing, pointing or miming. Use picture cards to point to what you mean when other strategies fail.

Assess the hard of hearing listener:



- How is the person feeling today? Well? In pain? Fatigued? Anxious?
- Has he or she started on different medication that could affect hearing, energy level, or ability to focus?
- Does the person have vision problems that could affect the ability to lipread?
- Can the person insert hearing aid batteries without help?
- Are the batteries in the hearing aid and are they charged?

How is the listening environment?

- Be sure there is no background noise, such as TV, radio, or noise from another room
- Ensure that the overall lighting is good
- Be sure the light source is not behind the person speaking
- Remove objects such as flower arrangements, candles, or centerpieces blocking the person's view of the speaker
- Stay within a 3-to-6 foot proximity of the speaker
- Use a PA system or listening system when needed

