



Why is hearing important?

Nelson has been having a hard time understanding what family and friends are saying during potlucks and gatherings. When his grandchildren talk, their voices are soft and hard to understand. Nelson feels embarrassed asking friends to repeat themselves at community board meetings and finds that he misses out on important conversations. After getting a hearing test and talking with an audiologist, Nelson was able to get hearing aids. Now, Nelson can hear clearly and talk with others easily. Taking care of your hearing can offer support to stay connected and enjoy life.

What can you look for?

- Trouble understanding speech in noisy places (gatherings, parties, meetings, etc.)
- Needing to turn up the volume on the TV or radio
- History of noise exposure (firearms, chainsaws, etc.)
- Tobacco use
- Diabetes

Often, we think hearing only occurs in our ears, but it is the brain that does most of the work. Our ears are the starting point of the pathway that passes sounds up to our brain. Hearing loss can happen at any or all parts of the hearing pathway. Caring for your hearing is important for wellness and quality of life.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Do you ask people to repeat what they say often?
- Is your personal or social life limited due to hearing loss?





What can you do?

- Listen to family and friends if they have concerns about your hearing
- Take care of your hearing by wearing ear protection (ear plugs, over-the-ear muffs) when around loud noise

Where can you find support?

- **Audiology** offers hearing tests and can assist you with getting hearing devices or protection.
- Your **Primary Care Team** can assist talking through hearing questions or concerns.
- **Diabetes Education Classes** can assist you with understanding and managing diabetes which affect hearing.
- **Tobacco Cessation** can provide support to quit tobacco use.

For more information, visit <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/aging-well/>

Alaska Native Health Campus Resources

Anchorage

(907) 729-3300

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(907) 631-7880

- Audiology
- Primary Care
 - Diabetes Education Class
- Tobacco Cessation

