

# Helping a Family Member With Hearing Loss

Hearing loss requires more effort and energy to hear and communicate. People with hearing loss can become stressed and tired if their condition is left untreated. In addition, feelings of embarrassment and shame can occur and can affect a person's self-esteem. Here are some ways that family members can help a loved one with hearing loss:



## Support Tips

- **Encourage your loved one to get help.** Spouses, adult children, and other family members generally provide the strongest influence when it comes to a person's decision to seek treatment.
- **Be understanding.** When people are diagnosed with hearing loss, they may experience a range of emotions, from denial to anger to sadness. Support from loved ones is critical.
- **Be present.** Attend audiology appointments with your loved one, if you can (in person or virtually). Ask questions and take notes while there. Help them research insurance coverage and hearing aid options.

## Communication Tips

- **Speak clearly** and in a normal tone of voice.
- **Don't shout.** Shouting just makes it harder for the person with hearing loss to understand.
- **Get the person's attention** before speaking.
- **Wait until you are in the same room** to have a conversation. Face the person as you speak.
- **Talk in quieter places.** Eliminate background noise, such as sounds from the TV.
- **Build breaks into your conversation.** People with hearing loss expend extra effort listening, which can cause fatigue. Intentionally create breaks in your conversation, to give *them* a break.
- **Turn on captioning** when watching TV or talking over video platforms such as Zoom.
- **Take steps to make communicating with masks easier.** Masks muffle sound, further compounding communication challenges for people with hearing loss. Visit [www.asha.org/public](http://www.asha.org/public) for tips.

For more information, visit [www.asha.org/](http://www.asha.org/).