



# spotlight on health

## Why Won't You Listen To Me?!

(NAPSA)—Communication is the foundation of every relationship. So when a loved one or friend appears to have stopped listening, the other person can feel ignored and resentful.

However, for the approximately 28 million Americans who suffer from hearing loss, a lack of attentiveness may not be intentional; it may be that they simply cannot hear what is being said.

According to Dr. David Fabry, clinical research audiologist, early warning signs of hearing loss may include difficulty hearing people unless they are facing you, setting the TV or radio higher than others would prefer, and fatigue and frustration caused by the effort to hear.

"Hearing is often an unappreciated sense despite the fact that hearing connects us to others through communication," said Fabry. "When we can't hear well, we are cut off. Many hearing-impaired people feel depressed, isolated and alone."

Ninety-five percent of hearing disorders can be corrected with the use of a hearing aid. However, the American Academy of Audiologists estimates that about half of sufferers will not seek help, often because they feel embarrassed or stigmatized wearing a hearing aid. Additionally, the person suffering the hearing loss may not recognize the extent of the problem. Family and loved ones often recognize the signs first, as they become more frustrated trying to make themselves heard.

People 65 and over—particularly those with vision and dexterity problems—tend to resist hearing aids because of the frustration involved in using these small devices, including the frequent replacement of tiny batteries.

If you or a loved one experience hearing problems that are causing a strain on daily life and relationships, the first step is to schedule



**In many cases, when a person seems to have stopped listening, a hearing aid can help to restore communication.**

an appointment with a licensed audiologist. The audiologist will run a range of tests to determine if and what type of hearing aid is needed. The hearing aid fitting will not end until both you and the audiologist are satisfied with the device's performance and your ability to use it.

Manufacturers are now offering hearing aids that are much less conspicuous for the wearer. For example, Phonak recently introduced new models that are extremely small and virtually invisible. One model is discreetly controlled by a specially designed wristwatch.

Accessories such as batteries are also becoming easier to use. Duracell EasyTab, a battery that features an extra-long tab that can be grasped between the thumb and forefinger and used as a "tool" to maneuver the battery into even the smallest hearing aid, simplifies hearing aid battery replacement. In addition, the package is easy to open and close and discreet to carry.

"Working with an audiologist, consumers can find hearing aids that are finely tailored to their hearing needs, lifestyle and preferences," said Fabry.

If you suspect you have a hearing problem, speak with an audiologist. To learn more about Duracell EasyTab batteries, visit the Web site at [www.duracell.com](http://www.duracell.com).