



**Grand Haven and Zeeland Ear & Hearing
 are now Comprehensive Ear & Hearing**

Can Hearing Instruments Delay Dementia?

In February of this year, researchers at Johns Hopkins and National Institute on Aging published a study suggesting a link between hearing loss and dementia. Their findings offer new perspective on various treatments and interventions – even the use of hearing aids – for the prevention or delay of dementia.

The study, which was published in the Archives of Neurology, used data from the Baltimore Longitudinal Study on Aging (BLSA). The BLSA data followed various health factors in thousands of men and women over decades. The current researchers used the data of over 600 people whose hearing and cognitive abilities were tested between 1990 and 1994. None of the participants had dementia at the start of the study and about a quarter had some degree of hearing loss. The results were further adjusted for age, sex, race, education, diabetes mellitus, smoking, and hypertension.

The participants were then followed every one to two years for the development of dementia through May, 2008. By the end of the study, 58 of them had developed dementia. Interestingly, the researchers found that those people with hearing loss were more likely to develop dementia. Further, the risk for developing dementia increased with the severity of the hearing loss. In other words, the greater the hearing loss the greater the risk of developing dementia.

The reason for this link remains unclear, but the researchers have some ideas. One thought is that hear-

ing loss may be related to dementia through exhaustion of cognitive reserve. When a hearing loss is present, it takes more cognition to process sound at the detriment of other processes such as memory. And hearing loss can also lead to social isolation which is already a known risk factor for dementia.

While the researchers caution that further study into this link is necessary, it certainly offers cause to treat a hearing loss as early as possible. "A lot of people ignore hearing loss because it's such a slow and insidious process as we age...even if people feel as if they are not affected, we're showing that it may well be a more serious problem," say the study leader Frank Lin, M.D., Ph.D. of Johns Hopkins.

F.R. Lin, E. J. Metter, R. J. O'Brien, S. M. Resnick, A. B. Zonderman, L. Ferrucci. Hearing Loss and Incident Dementia. Archives of Neurology, 2011; 68 (2): 214-220.

Cari Marzolf has 15 years experience as a clinical audiologist specializing in hearing loss diagnostics, treatment and amplification for all ages.



Our services include:

- Audiological testing • Hearing instruments • Custom sound & swim plugs
- Free hearing instrument trials • Free consultations
- Repairs and maintenance on all makes of hearing instruments
- Medical Ear & Hearing Care and wax removal by ENT
- Medicare and most insurance accepted • Medical Flexible Spending Account Eligible

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
 After hours appointments available by request.

Dr. Terry DeGroot is available at all three Comprehensive Ear & Hearing locations for Medical Ear & Hearing Care including Cerumen Management.

If you have a patient with any of the following symptoms an appointment with Dr. DeGroot is suggested:



Terry DeGroot, M.D.

- Sudden hearing loss or noticeable change in hearing
- Dizziness
- Ringing in the ears
- Ear pain or pressure
- History of ear wax accumulation

Cerumen management in particular is key to ear and hearing health and hygiene.

Comprehensive EAR & HEARING

Zeeland • Holland • Grand Haven

1101 Columbus Ave. Grand Haven, MI 49417

111 W. 24th St. Holland, MI 49424

300 S. State St. Suite 1, Zeeland, MI 49464

**Please refer any patients you suspect may have a hearing loss
to one of our offices for a complete audiological evaluation!**



Cari Marzolf,
MA, CCC-A,
Audiologist

Carli Van Harken,
HIS, Owner

Terry DeGroot,
M.D.

Kristin Johnston
BA, BC-HIS, Owner

Julie Bowen
Hearing Instrument
Technician

The Art of Human Touch

**By Cari Marzolf, MA, CCC-A, Clinical
Audiologist at Comprehensive Ear & Hearing**

No doubt you have choices when deciding to refer a patient for audiology services. How do you make that decision? How do you know the office you are referring to is the right fit for your patient?

At our office we take the human touch seriously. We know that patient satisfaction is directly related to the interaction with their hearing care professional. Patients will often ask about the pros and cons of various hearing aid brands, and while there are differences, the bottom line for a successful fit is the dispenser with which they are working. If the patient is not comfortable and confident in us, then success may be limited. We make every effort for our patients to feel as though this is a team effort – with them being the central player.

No-obligation hearing aid demonstrations are key to that philosophy. Whenever possible, based on hearing loss, we

try to provide a hearing aid for patients to listen to in the office. If successful, we will often let them take the aids home to try in their “world” to judge for themselves if the aids are beneficial. All at no obligation, financial or otherwise. If a picture is worth a thousand words, hearing must be worth a million.

We invest our time and effort into our patients. Many people come to us with hearing aids purchased elsewhere. We service those aids and welcome those patients into our “family” and get them started on a six month check-up routine.

You as the referring physician, are also kept “in the loop”. Any patient referred to us – either for hearing testing or to see Dr. DeGroot – has a report sent back to the doctor that sent them to us explaining the test results and treatment plan.

If you or your staff are interested in seeing what we do, please know that you are always welcome to schedule a complimentary hearing exam. We look forward to working with you!

We now have three locations to better serve your patients

300 S. State St. Suite 1, Zeeland, MI 49464

1101 Columbus Ave. Grand Haven, MI 49417

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(616) 772-1986

(616) 847-3144

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