

*It's a Noisy Planet. Protect Their
Hearing.*

Customer Satisfaction Survey Screen Shots

NOVA Research Company
March 14, 2013



A program of the National Institutes of Health

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

[Click here to begin the NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey.](#)



A program of the National Institutes of Health

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), part of the National Institutes of Health, is conducting a customer satisfaction survey about *It's A Noisy Planet. Protect Their Hearing*. This is a health education campaign to increase awareness about and prevention of noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL).

The NIDCD wants to learn what you think about the campaign materials available to the public. You are being asked to participate in this survey because you ordered Noisy Planet or NIDCD materials in the past year. **Your participation in this survey is voluntary** and will help the NIDCD create a more effective campaign to reach youth ages 8-12 (tweens) and their parents.

Completing the survey **should take about 10-15 minutes**. We want your opinion, so **there are no wrong answers**. You should know that:

- Your participation is anonymous.
- Only a few people directly involved in the survey will have access to your contact information. After the survey is complete, your contact information will be destroyed.
- Your responses will be added to those of other participants and analyzed as a group.
- You can choose to not answer questions or stop your participation at any time without consequence to you.

The NIDCD is authorized to conduct this study under section 42 USC 285f of U.S. Law, and has contracted with NOVA Research to conduct the study. If you have questions about this study or your participation, please contact Daniel Eckstein by email at DEckstein@novaresearch.com or by phone at 240-483-4192.

By clicking on the link below, you certify that **you are at least 18 years of age** and voluntarily consent to participate in this survey. Thank you!

- Agree
- Decline participation

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

What type of organization are you from? *(Select all that apply)*

- Not affiliated with an organization
- Community or youth group (e.g., 4-H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts)
- Educational (school or home school)
- Faith-based organization
- Professional society (hearing- or speech-related)
- Professional society (not hearing- or speech-related)
- Other

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please specify other type of organization:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Did you order Noisy Planet materials online or over the phone?

- Online
- Over the phone
- Both

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

When did you order Noisy Planet Materials?

- Within the past 3 months
- 3 to 6 months ago
- 6 months ago or longer

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How did you first learn about Noisy Planet materials? *(Select all that apply)*

- From the Noisy Planet website
 - From my child
 - From my child's teacher
 - From a health care professional
 - At a local health fair
 - At a professional meeting/conference
 - From an organization I belong to
 - From a school presentation
 - From a link on another web site
 - From a friend or colleague
 - From a newspaper article
 - From a radio story
 - Through Facebook
 - Through a search engine, such as Google (TM)
 - From the NIDCD website
 - From a newsletter
 - Other
-
- Don't remember
 - Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please specify organization you belong to:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Have you used the Noisy Planet materials you ordered already?

Yes No

[Previous Question](#)

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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How did you use the Noisy Planet materials? *(Select all that apply)*

- For personal interest
- In my home or with my family
- In my classroom
- With youth group I lead
- Distribute to organization/youth group
- As part of a presentation at a local school
- As part of a presentation to parents
- As part of a presentation to health professionals
- At a health fair or school fair
- With a Faith-based organization
- Some other way

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please specify other way you used the Noisy Planet materials:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Which of the following best describes the target audience for your Noisy Planet activity? *(Select all that apply)*

- Children (under 8)
- Tweens (ages 8-12)
- Teens (ages 13-19)
- Parents of tweens
- Teachers or other educators
- Other

Decline to Answer

Does not apply

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please specify other target audience:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How many participants did you expect to reach through your activity/ies?

- 4 or fewer
- 5-19
- 20-49
- 50-99
- 100-149
- 150 or more

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Did you notice that Noisy Planet materials can be **downloaded** from the Noisy Planet website?

- Yes No
- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Did you download any materials from the Noisy Planet website?

- Yes
- No, I did not need to download anything
- No, I tried to download, but it did not work

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please tell us how easy or difficult it was to use the download feature:

- Very Difficult
- Somewhat Difficult
- Easy
- Very easy

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Noisy Planet materials may be copied--did you duplicate or distribute materials that you **downloaded** from the website?

- Yes No
- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)




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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Which of the following English-language materials did you order? (Select all that apply)

- None
 - Bookmark: How Loud is Too Loud?
 - Bookmark: How Loud is Too Loud on the Farm?
 - Fact Sheet: Noise-Induced Hearing Loss
 - Fact Sheet: How Loud is Too Loud? How Long is Too Long?
 - Fact Sheet: Why Teach Tweens about Noise-Induced Hearing Loss?
 - Parent Tips: Noise: Keeping it Down at Home
 - Parent Tips: Protect Their Hearing: What Parents Can Do
 - Parent Tips: Noise: Keeping it Down on the Farm
 - Parent Tips: Sound Advice on Hearing Protection for Young Ears
 - Parent Tips: Teachable Moments about Healthy Hearing
 - Parent Tips: Teaching Tweens about Hearing Protectors
 - Noisy Planet Poster, Cartoon
 - Noisy Planet Poster
 - Noisy Planet Keep Noise Down on the Farm Poster
 - Noisy Planet Pencils
 - 2012 Calendar
- Don't remember
 Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Bookmark	Fact Sheets	Parent Tips	Posters
 <p>How Loud is Too Loud?</p>	 <p>How Loud is Too Loud? How Long is Too Long?</p>	 <p>Noise: Keeping it Down at Home</p>	 <p>Noisy Planet Poster</p>
		Pencils	Calendars
		 <p>Noisy Planet Pencils</p>	 <p>Calendar</p> <p>No longer available</p>

Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Which of the following Spanish-language materials did you order? (Select all that apply)

- None
- Bookmark: ¿Cuándo el ruido es demasiado ruido? (How Loud Bookmark)
- Fact Sheet: La pérdida de audición inducida por el ruido (Noise-Induced Hearing Loss)
- Fact Sheet: ¿Cuándo el ruido es demasiado ruido? ¿Cuándo empieza el ruido a causar daño? (How Loud)
- Fact Sheet: ¿Por qué hay que enseñar a los niños sobre la pérdida de audición inducida por el ruido? (Why Teach)
- Parent Tips: El ruido: cómo disminuirlo en el hogar (Keeping it Down at Home)
- Parent Tips: Proteja la audición de sus hijos: lo que usted puede hacer (Protect Their Hearing)
- Parent Tips: Recomendaciones para proteger la capacidad auditiva de sus hijos (Sound Advice)
- Parent Tips: Momentos oportunos para la enseñanza de la audición saludable (Teachable Moments)
- Parent Tips: Enseñe a los niños sobre los protectores de oídos (Teaching Tweens)

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Bookmark	Fact Sheets	Parent Tips
 <p>¿Cuándo el ruido es demasiado ruido?</p>	 <p>¿Cuándo el ruido es demasiado ruido? ¿Cuándo empieza el ruido a causar daño?</p>	 <p>El ruido: cómo disminuirlo en el hogar</p>
<p>Next Question</p>	<p>Next Question</p>	<p>Next Question</p>



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Now we are going to ask you a few questions about one of the items you ordered.

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud?**

Material is easy to understand and use and appears to be relevant to the audience.

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud?**

Illustrations and graphics are relevant and useful

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud?**

Fonts are large enough and consistent throughout

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



Previous Question

Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud?**

Text is culturally sensitive

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



Previous Question

Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How satisfied are you with the Noisy Planet Bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud?**

- Not at all satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



Previous Question

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Do the Noisy Planet materials meet your needs and expectations?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
- Don't Know

- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How likely are the Noisy Planet materials to help **you** remember to "Turn it down, Walk away, or Use Hearing Protection"?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
- Don't Know

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How likely are the Noisy Planet materials to help **children** "Turn it down, Walk away, or Use Hearing Protection"?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
- Don't Know

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Do you think the Noisy Planet materials help **parents** teach tweens to remember to "Turn it down, Walk away, or Use Hearing Protection"?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
- Don't Know

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How likely are you to use any of the materials, ideas, tips, or tools in the future?

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
- Don't Know

- Don't remember
- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



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What other kinds of Noisy Planet materials would you find useful?

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Do you have other comments about or suggestions for Noisy Planet materials?

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

The next questions are about you.

Are you of Hispanic/Latino/Spanish origin?

Yes No

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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How would you describe your race? *(Select all that apply)*

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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What is your gender?

Male Female

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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Which of the following categories best describes the highest educational level you attained?

- Less than a high school degree
- High school degree or GED
- Some college/technical school/associates degree
- College degree
- Some graduate school or more
- Other

- Decline to Answer

Previous Question

Next Question



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Please specify other educational level:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Survey Complete!

Thank you for participating in this survey. For more information about *It's a Noisy Planet. Protect Their Hearing*®, visit <http://www.noisyplanet.nidcd.nih.gov>.



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How do you plan to use the Noisy Planet materials? *(Select all that apply)*

- For personal interest
- In my home or with my family
- In my classroom
- With youth group I lead
- Distribute to organization/youth group
- As part of a presentation at a local school
- As part of a presentation to parents
- As part of a presentation to health professionals
- At a health fair or school fair
- With a Faith-based organization
- Some other way

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please specify other way you plan to use the Noisy Planet materials:

Decline to Answer

[Previous Question](#)

[Next Question](#)



NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How many participants do you expect to reach through your activity/ies?

- 4 or fewer
- 5-19
- 20-49
- 50-99
- 100-149
- 150 or more

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

Previous Question

Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud on the Farm?**

Material is easy to understand and use and appears to be relevant to the audience.

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

Previous Question



Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language bookmark: **How Loud is Too Loud on the Farm?**

Illustrations and graphics are relevant and useful

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply



Previous Question

Next Question



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

Material is easy to understand and use and appears to be relevant to the audience.

- Not at all
 Somewhat
 Very Much

 Decline to Answer
 Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

What is noise-induced hearing loss?

Every day, we experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from television and radio, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise—sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that for a long time—sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back.

What sounds cause NIHL?

NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense “impulse” sound, such as an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time, such as noise generated in a woodworking shop.

Sound is measured in units called decibels. On the decibel scale, an increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The humming of a refrigerator is 45 decibels, normal conversation is approximately 60 decibels, and the noise from heavy city traffic can reach 85 decibels. Sources of noise that can cause NIHL include motorcycles, firearms, and small firearms, all emitting sounds from 120 to 150 decibels. Long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 decibels can cause hearing loss. The louder the sound, the shorter the time period before NIHL can

The sound pathway

NIHL occurs. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss.

Although being aware of decibel levels is an important step in protecting your hearing, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are “too loud” and “too close” or that last “too long.”

What are the effects of NIHL?

Exposure to harmful sounds causes damage to the hair cells as well as the auditory or hearing nerve (see figure). Impulse sounds can result in immediate hearing loss that may be permanent. This kind of hearing loss may be accompanied by tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or roaring in the ears or head—when they subside over time. Hearing loss and tinnitus

NIDCD National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders
Helping the ears of people who have communication disabilities

Previous Question

Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

Illustrations and graphics are relevant and useful

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

What is noise-induced hearing loss?

Every day, we experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from television and radio, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise—sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time—sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back.

What sounds cause NIHL?

NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense “impulsive” sound, such as an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time, such as noise generated in a wood-working shop.

Sound is measured in units called decibels. On the decibel scale, an increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The humming of a refrigerator is 45 decibels, normal conversation is approximately 60 decibels, and the noise from heavy city traffic can reach 85 decibels. Sources of noise that can cause NIHL include motorcycles, firearms, and small firearms, all emitting sounds from 120 to 150 decibels. Long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 decibels can cause hearing loss. The louder the sound, the shorter the time period before NIHL can occur.

The sound pathway



The diagram illustrates the sound pathway through the ear. Labels include: Ear canal, Eardrum, Ossicles (Malleus, Incus, Stapes), Cochlea, Semicircular canals, Vestibule, Auditory nerve, and Brain. A vertical label on the right side of the diagram reads 'Illustration © NIH'.

NIHL occurs. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss.

Although being aware of decibel levels is an important factor in preventing noise-induced hearing loss, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are “too loud” and “too close” or that last “too long.”

What are the effects of NIHL?

Exposure to harmful sound causes damage to the hair cells as well as the auditory, or hearing, nerve (see figure). Impulsive sounds can result in immediate hearing loss that may be permanent. This kind of hearing loss may be accompanied by tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or roaring in the ears or head—which may subside over time. Hearing loss and tinnitus

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

Page is well organized and include lots of white space

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES | NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH | NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

What is noise-induced hearing loss?

Every day, we experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from television and radio, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise—sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time—sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back.

What sounds cause NIHL?

NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense “impulse” sound, such as an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time, such as noise generated in a woodworking shop.

Sound is measured in units called decibels. On the decibel scale, an increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The humming of a refrigerator is 45 decibels, normal conversation is approximately 60 decibels, and the noise from heavy city traffic can reach 85 decibels. Sources of noise that can cause NIHL include motorcycles, lawnmowers, and small firearms, all emitting sounds from 120 to 150 decibels. Long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 decibels can cause hearing loss. The louder the sound, the shorter the time period before NIHL can

The sound pathway

occur. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss.

Although being aware of decibel levels is an important factor in preventing your hearing, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are “too loud” and “too close” or “too long.”

What are the effects of NIHL?

Exposure to harmful sounds causes damage to the hair cells, as well as the auditory or hearing nerve (see figure). Impulse sound can result in immediate hearing loss that may be permanent. This kind of hearing loss may be accompanied by tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or roaring in the ears or head—which may subside over time. Hearing loss and tinnitus



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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

Fonts are large enough and consistent throughout

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES • NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH • NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

What is noise-induced hearing loss?

Every day, we experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from televisions and radios, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise—sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time—sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back.

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The sound pathway

The diagram illustrates the sound pathway through the ear. Labels include: Pinna, Ear canal, Eardrum, Hammer, Anvil, Stirrup, Oval window, Round window, Cochlea, Auditory nerve, and Brain. Arrows indicate the path of sound waves from the eardrum through the ossicles to the cochlea and then to the auditory nerve.

occur. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss.

Although being aware of decibel levels is an important factor in protecting your hearing, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are “too loud” and “too close” or “near” or “too long.”

What are the effects of NIHL?

Exposure to harmful sounds causes damage to the hair cells as well as the auditory or hearing nerve (see figure). Impulse sounds can result in immediate hearing loss that may be permanent. This kind of hearing loss may be accompanied by tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or hissing in the ears or head—which may subside over time. Hearing loss and tinnitus



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Next Question

NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

Text is culturally sensitive

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
-
- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

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The sound pathway

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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

How satisfied are you with the Noisy Planet Fact Sheet:
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

- Not at all satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

NIDCD Fact Sheet
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss

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NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
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What is noise-induced hearing loss?

Every day, we experience sound in our environment, such as the sounds from television and radio, household appliances, and traffic. Normally, we hear these sounds at safe levels that do not affect our hearing. However, when we are exposed to harmful noise—sounds that are too loud or loud sounds that last a long time—sensitive structures in our inner ear can be damaged, causing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). These sensitive structures, called hair cells, are small sensory cells that convert sound energy into electrical signals that travel to the brain. Once damaged, our hair cells cannot grow back.

What sounds cause NIHL?

NIHL can be caused by a one-time exposure to an intense “impulse” sound, such as an explosion, or by continuous exposure to loud sounds over an extended period of time, such as noise generated in a woodworking shop.

Sound is measured in units called decibels. On the decibel scale, an increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The humming of a refrigerator is 45 decibels, normal conversation is approximately 60 decibels, and the noise from heavy city traffic can reach 85 decibels. Sources of noise that can cause NIHL include motorcycles, firecrackers, and small firearms, all emitting sounds from 120 to 140 decibels. Long or repeated exposure to sounds at or above 85 decibels can cause hearing loss. The louder the sound, the shorter the time period before NIHL can

The sound pathway

The diagram illustrates the sound pathway through the ear. Labels include: Ear canal, Eardrum, Ossicles (Malleus, Incus, Stapes), Cochlea, Vestibule, Semicircular canals, and Auditory nerve. The sound enters through the ear canal, hits the eardrum, and is transmitted through the ossicles to the cochlea and vestibule. The semicircular canals are also shown. The auditory nerve carries signals from the cochlea to the brain.

NIHL occurs. Sounds of less than 75 decibels, even after long exposure, are unlikely to cause hearing loss.

Although being aware of decibel levels is an important factor in preserving one's hearing, distance from the source of the sound and duration of exposure to the sound are equally important. A good rule of thumb is to avoid noises that are “too loud” and “too close” or that are “too long.”

What are the effects of NIHL?

Exposure to harmful sounds causes damage to the hair cells as well as the auditory, or hearing, nerve (see figure). Impulse sound can result in immediate hearing loss that may be permanent. This kind of hearing loss may be accompanied by tinnitus—a ringing, buzzing, or roaring in the ears or head—which may subside over time. Hearing loss and tinnitus

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Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **How Loud is Too Loud? How Long is Too Long?**

Material is easy to understand and use and appears to be relevant to the audience.

- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much

- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

How Loud is Too Loud? How Long is Too Long?

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How is sound measured?
Sound is measured in units called decibels. Decibel levels begin at zero, which is near total silence and the weakest sound our ears can hear. By comparison, a whisper is 30 decibels and a normal conversation is 60 decibels. An increase of 10 means that a sound is 10 times more intense, or powerful. To your ears, it sounds twice as loud. The sound of an ambulance siren at 120 decibels is about 1 trillion times more intense than the weakest sound our ears can hear. Sounds that reach 120 decibels are painful to our ears at close distances. Scientists believe that, depending upon the type of sound, the pure force of its vibrations at high decibel levels can cause hearing loss. Recent studies also show that exposure to sounds at harmful decibel levels triggers the formation of molecules inside the ear that damage hair cells. These destructive molecules play an important role in hearing loss in children and adults who listen to loud noise for too long.

How does time multiply the danger of NIHL?
NIHL is related both to the decibel level of a sound and to the amount of time you are exposed to it. The distance you are from the sound also matters. A sound gets louder as you move closer to the source and softer as you move away from it. If you are far away from the sound, its intensity and its potential to cause damage are much lower. In addition, the impact of noise adds up over a lifetime. If you are exposed to loud sounds on a regular basis, your risk for permanent damage adds up as you age. NIHL is also related to a person's genes. Some people are more likely than others to develop NIHL when they listen to certain sounds. Scientists are working to determine which people are more at risk for NIHL and which are less at risk. For this reason, we all need to protect our hearing when we are exposed to loud noise.

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NIH Customer Satisfaction Survey

Please rate the English-language Fact Sheet: **Why Teach Tweens about Noise-Induced Hearing Loss?**

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- Not at all
- Somewhat
- Very Much
-
- Decline to Answer
- Does not apply

Why Teach Tweens about Noise-Induced Hearing Loss?

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Tweens are at an age when they begin to act more independently. Now is a great time to teach them about protecting their hearing from noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL).

Children, just like adults, are at risk for NIHL. This type of hearing loss occurs when tiny sensory hair cells in the inner ear are damaged by noises that are too loud and that last for too long. NIHL can be permanent.

The ability to hear well helps children succeed in school, in sports and other activities, and in their personal relationships. Many sources of noise that can potentially damage the hearing of children are part of their daily, normal lives. Some potential sources of damaging noise include:

- Workshop tools and yard equipment
- Concerts of all music types
- Sporting events, hunting, and other leisure-time activities
- Trains, planes, all-terrain vehicles, tractors, and other vehicles
- School cafeterias and food courts

Most young people, however, are not aware of NIHL or how they can prevent it. In a survey conducted by the MTV website, only 16 percent of teens and young adults who responded reported that they had heard, read, or seen any information on NIHL (Pediatrics, 2005).

Even when young people understand the risk of NIHL, they do not always follow through by adopting habits that protect their hearing. These habits are simple, such as turning down the volume on entertainment systems (e.g., MP3 players) or wearing earplugs or earmuffs in noisy environments. One study of college students found that even among those who knew about NIHL, almost three-quarters had never worn hearing protectors (Journal of the National Medical Association, 2004).

These examples show why it is important to teach children about the causes and prevention of NIHL early on, so that healthy hearing habits become a natural choice.

Tweens are at an age when they are developing as individuals and beginning to make some of their own choices. They are asking for a greater say in their after-school activities, music, and clothes. They also are developing their own health-related attitudes and habits, which can help or hurt their health for a lifetime.

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Illustrations and graphics are relevant and useful

- Not at all
- Somewhat
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- Not at all
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- Trains, planes, all-terrain vehicles, tractors, and other vehicles
- School cafeterias and food courts

Most young people, however, are not aware of NIHL or how they can prevent it. In a survey conducted by the MTV website, only 16 percent of teens and young adults who responded reported that they had heard, read, or seen any information on NIHL (Pediatrics, 2005).

Even when young people understand the risk of NIHL, they do not always follow through by adopting habits that protect their hearing. These habits are simple, such as turning down the volume on entertainment systems (e.g., MP3 players) or wearing earplugs or earmuffs in noisy environments. One study of college students found that even among those who knew about NIHL, almost three-quarters had never worn hearing protectors (Journal of the National Medical Association, 2004).

These examples show why it is important to teach children about the causes and prevention of NIHL early on, so that healthy hearing habits become a natural choice.

Tweens are at an age when they are developing as individuals and beginning to make some of their own choices. They are asking for a greater say in their after-school activities, music, and clothes. They also are developing their own health-related attitudes and habits, which can help or hurt their health for a lifetime.

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