

Don't ignore hearing problems – get tested now

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Do you notice you have to turn up the volume on your TV in order to hear the dialog in your favorite show? When your son calls on the phone, do you find yourself asking him to repeat what he just said because you didn't catch it all? These can be indications of early hearing loss and mean it's time to schedule a hearing test.

Hearing loss is one of the most common disabilities in elderly people, affecting about one-third of people over the age of 65, according to the American Academy of Neurology. Peripheral age-related hearing loss is caused by problems in how the inner

ear and hearing nerves function and leads to people not being able to hear.

Lanie Tandy, a hearing instrument specialist with All American Hearing in Redmond, advises that anyone over the age of 60, or sooner if they are experiencing particular symptoms, should schedule an appointment for an assessment of their hearing.

Symptoms of hearing loss include trouble understanding speech. You may be hearing what someone is saying but you are having difficulty understanding them clearly. You may find when you are in a noisy room, or there is a lot of background noise, you have trouble understanding what the person you are listening to is saying. Ringing in the ears (tinnitus) is

annoying and can also indicate hearing issues.

Do you find yourself more frequently asking people to repeat what they just said? Is it becoming more difficult to hear when you are talking on the phone? You may need to adjust the volume on the television or when you are on your computer in a Zoom meeting. Any one or more of these situations could be indicating a loss of hearing.

"If hearing loss is not addressed early on, one runs the risk of permanent damage to the auditory system," according to Tandy. "The longer one goes with an untreated hearing loss, they lose the ability to process the speech that comes in.

In that case, we could put the very best hearing devices on that patient's ears and they will still have limitations based on their decreased speech understanding scores (processing abilities). We can treat the hearing loss most effectively the sooner the patient comes in for help."

According to Tandy, there is no cost for an exam. However, Medicare does not cover the cost of hearing aids.

"That's why we find it really important to offer a large variety of styles and technology levels to meet different budgets," said Tandy.

Wash fresh produce as soon as you get home under warm, running water, scrubbing gently at the surface.



ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/PORTFOLIO/GRPOINTSTUDIO

Safe shopping for better health

By Ashlee Francis
Correspondent

This past year of living through a worldwide pandemic has restructured our way of living. Some people used the time in lockdown to improve health through cleaning their homes, making time to meditate, and creating fitness routines to help them lose weight or tone their bodies. On the other hand, many people took advantage of the time to create comfort foods, with popular new hobbies consisting of making banana bread and sourdough. Depending on how one views this pandemic, the high risk of leaving your house could either be a huge deterrent to getting healthy or the driving motivator.

It's difficult walking into the produce aisle at the grocery store and seeing people pulling their masks off to smell the produce or licking their

fingers to open the plastic bag before choosing their fruit with that same saliva-covered hand. The idea of the virus, the flu, and other germs being spread easily in the produce aisle may have people running toward the middle aisles of processed foods: cereals, crackers, rice and more.

It makes sense that grabbing a wrapped candy or protein bar as a snack would seem safer than picking up an apple that has been touched by multiple shoppers and employees. Eating this way is not the best thing for your health though. Processed foods contain sugars and stabilizers, such as gums, to help them last longer on the shelves. When we put these into our bodies, we are consuming toxins that can irritate our guts and lead to inflammation, higher stress levels, and illness. The purpose of not getting the produce was to stay safe, but instead we have put ourselves more at risk.

To eat whole, nutritious foods while staying clear of germs, try washing your produce as soon as you get home. Rinse your fruits and vegetables under warm, running water, scrubbing gently at the surface. There is no need to use soap or bleach; running water will be enough as long as you rub the extra grime off. For firm produce, such as potatoes, apples and carrots, use a produce brush to get them clean. Dry your produce after washing, then store as usual. For produce with a peel, such as bananas and oranges, washing is still a good idea. You may not plan to eat the peel, but reducing the risk of anything on the peel rubbing off onto your hands or the other produce

will help keep food clean.

Even if you do choose to buy cereal or packaged items, there is a thought that the virus can live on cardboard boxes for up to 24 hours and on plastic for two to three days. Clean the surfaces of these items when you arrive home, keeping them separate from clean items in your home until finished. Afterward, wash your hands well, especially before touching your face.

Send "Sisters" to friends and family afar!

They may not be able to visit right now, but they can experience this special place through the pages of *The Nugget Newspaper*.

The Nugget Newspaper has been delivering the news, opinions, and interesting stories of Sisters for over 40 years. It is mailed to all homes in the Sisters School District free of charge and available by subscription outside the area.

Family & friends afar will appreciate a gift subscription... the gift they get to open again every week!



Coffee mug art ©2018 www.KathyDeggendeter.com

Order at www.NuggetNews.com (click "Subscribe & Support") or call 541-549-9941