

This factsheet is to help you prepare, get the most from, to think about questions you are likely to be asked as well as questions you may want to ask during an NHS Audiology appointment.

It may also be useful to you if you use a private provider.

Preparing for NHS audiology appointments

It can be daunting to have a hearing test and then discuss the option of using hearing aids. There are different types of hearing aids and they have different functions.

These are some key areas you need to consider:

1] Do you have any other health conditions?

Ask if they are aware of other medical conditions you have (e.g. diabetes, heart condition). Whilst NHS Audiologists should have background from your GP it is sensible to double check because certain health conditions impact on your hearing and may make a difference to the advice you get.

Make sure you provide a list of any medications you take, since these can also affect your hearing.

2] When does your hearing loss cause you the most difficulties?

When deciding which hearing aid is best suited to your needs the audiologist takes your lifestyle and activities into account. If you have stopped some activities because of your hearing loss, tell them.

- Is it at work, in social settings or are you struggling to hear most of the time?
- If you work what does the work entail and how is hearing loss impacting on you?
- Have you started to avoid social settings and family gatherings?

3] What do you need from a Hearing Aid?

If you are new to hearing aids you probably don't know much about them. It is worthwhile finding out some basic information before you go. A hearing aid will help you hear better but it will not make your hearing perfect.

There are many types of hearing aids – behind the ear, in the ear, in the canal etc. and you need to think which suits you best. The NHS will provide or 'loan' some hearing aids for free.

You might benefit from a "t/loop" function. A t/loop function is a switch on the hearing aid that enables you to tune into a hearing loop or other amplification device. It cuts out the background noise so you can only hear the person speaking into the microphone and it is often found in public areas like hospitals, banks and shops. It can be added at a later date but that means you need to wait for another appointment so it is a good idea to ask for it.

Are you confident using a smartphone? Do you know about and use Bluetooth? New hearing aids often have these as an option so it is helpful if the audiologist knows about your level of experience/ confidence.

If you have tinnitus you might benefit from a hearing aid that includes maskers which can help alleviate/ cover up the sounds you hear using white or pink noise.

4] Write down questions in advance

Before your appointment write down any questions you have as you think of them and take the list with you, it is common to feel overwhelmed during an appointment and forget to ask something important

If you have hearing aids fitted or are being given new hearing aids remember to ask about a follow up appointment so any adjustments needed to suit your everyday life can be made.

Make a note of any difficulties you have between appointments

If you can't hear or understand what is being said during the appointment please tell them. Audiologists are used to dealing with people who may not be able to hear them and will be happy to repeat, explain or write information down for you

Please remember

Any issues regarding use of hearing aids with other non NHS equipment will need to be referred to the manufacturers or suppliers if you have problem. Deaflink can work with you to help solve technical issues

More information you may find useful:

Deaflink Equipment information sheet

<https://www.deaflink.org.uk/index.php/services/equipment>

Videos to help you use and maintain hearing aids <https://c2hearonline.com/patient1.html>