Hearing Aid Services
Christie Clinic on University
101 West University Avenue
Second Floor
Champaign, IL 61820
217.366.1387

Department of Audiology
Christie Clinic on University
101 West University Avenue
Located in the ENT Department
Champaign, IL 61820
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Both departments are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday.
Do hearing aids really help?
Yes. Hearing aids can dramatically improve speech clarity and ease of listening. Your ultimate success will depend on your ability to develop an effective fitting strategy with your audiologist. Together you will select the most appropriate hearing aids and then your audiologist will program them for optimal performance. Your motivation and willingness to adapt to new sounds increase your chances of a successful outcome.

Does it matter who fits my hearing aids?
Yes! With hearing aids, the “one size fits all” principle does not apply. Your audiologist will carefully weigh your needs and preferences against cost and complexity issues. Your audiologist will also guide you through the fitting process, make adjustments based on your needs, and provide troubleshooting and repair services if needed.

Do hearing aids eliminate background noise?
Hearing aids can accurately identify speech and various types of background noise. In general, hearing aids are able to selectively amplify speech sounds while suppressing interfering background noises. Some noises are suppressed better than others. No hearing aid eliminates all background noise.

Do I need one hearing aid or two?
People hear better with two ears than one. For most people, the ability to identify the source of a sound and to understand speech in a background of noise is improved by use of two hearing aids. In a few specific cases only one hearing aid is needed.

Are more expensive models worth the price?
If you work or socialize in demanding listening environments, the advanced features found in more expensive hearing aids may be well worth the price. Technologies are available to help in nearly any situation. If you have simple listening needs, less expensive models can be just as effective.
What features should I look for in new hearing aids?

All new hearing aids are digital. All hearing aids have some form of feedback suppression and background noise reduction, but the level of sophistication varies between models. Most hearing aids have directional microphones, a very desirable feature in noisy restaurants. Directional microphones enhance sounds coming from one direction but suppress sounds coming from other directions so that speech can be understood in noisy backgrounds. Most hearing aids are capable of streaming data from Bluetooth or other digital wireless sources.

How much do hearing aids cost?

Entry level digital hearing aids start at $2,800 per pair. Mid level models range from $3,800-$4,500 per pair. High end digital hearing aids cost $5,000-$6,500 per pair. Cost is determined by circuit sophistication, not style.

Can I get help paying for the hearing aids?

Christie Clinic has contracts with many insurance companies that offer hearing aid benefits. Check with your benefits coordinator to see if your plan includes coverage. We also work with government, state, and private agencies that provide hearing aid benefits. We will be happy to discuss these options with you.

What should I expect after my fitting?

The most obvious improvement will be in your ability to clearly understand normal speech. If the hearing aids are properly adjusted, speech will be clear and comfortable. Hearing aids can help in noisy areas, too, but you will most likely hear better in quieter rooms. This is also true of individuals who have completely normal hearing. Keep in mind that there will be a period of adjustment. You must relearn to use the sounds that become available to you through the hearing aids. A positive attitude will help during this period!

**HEARING AID STYLES**

**Open Fit**
- **Pros:** Small, discreet, natural “open” feel and sound, available in all power levels, own voice sounds more natural
- **Cons:** Wind noise, battery life, potential for wax blockage

**Behind-the-Ear (BTE)**
- **Pros:** Power, flexibility, durability, and battery life
- **Cons:** Wind noise and visibility

**In-the Ear and In-the Canal (ITE & ITC)**
- **Pros:** Full featured, easy to handle, customized for secure fit
- **Cons:** Visibility and potential for wax blockage

**Completely In-the-Canal (CIC)**
- **Pros:** Barely visible, low wind noise, easy to use on the phone
- **Cons:** Low power, short battery life, potential for wax blockage
CIRCUIT OPTIONS

Hearing aids that look alike do not necessarily perform alike. Circuitry and features vary between models. What works best for you will depend on previous hearing aid experience, type and degree of hearing loss, personal preference, and cost. Here are the most common designs in order of decreasing complexity and sophistication:

**High Level Digital**
These are the most advanced designs available. They have the greatest number of channels and the best resolution. Noise reduction and speech enhancement features are also more advanced. They adapt to many different environments quickly and automatically.

**Mid Level Digital**
These hearing aids offer most of the benefits of high level models, but with fewer channels and fewer high-end features. They offer a significant improvement over entry level models. Mid level models adapt automatically to several different listening conditions.

**Entry Level Digital**
These are the most basic models. They have the same power as more expensive models. However, they have the fewest channels and features. Warranty and insurance periods are generally shorter. Still, they can be very effective for individuals with simple listing needs.

**Optional Streaming Devices**
Digital wireless technology makes no-hassle connectivity a reality. Sound from your television, telephone, computer, and stereo can be routed wirelessly through your hearing aids. Streaming technology provides the best possible sound quality for your chosen devices. Additional devices are necessary to take advantage of this technology (see streaming devices photo in this brochure).