

Heat, Moisture, and Hearing Aids are Not a Good Mix!

Hearing aids take a beating every day. They sit behind a person's ear, or inside a person's ear canal, for *hours*, everyday. It's *hot*. It's *moist*. It's *ear-waxy*. It's *brutal!* Electronics and batteries would rather run away and hide, but they don't. Instead, they do their best to persevere through the extreme conditions and work hard to help their owner communicate, hear their environment, and maintain balance.

Hearing aid wearers need to take extra precautions to ensure their devices do not malfunction due to heat or moisture. Hot summer days, perspiration, dusty environments all take a toll. Condensation can build up inside a hearing aid's housing. Moisture bubbles can hide inside behind-the-ear hearing aid earmould tubing and block sound completely. If an aid is overheated or wet inside, it may sound intermittent, weak, dead, or act sporadically (e.g. strange

beeping, aid re-starting itself, volume changes).

Hearing aids should *never* be left in direct sunlight or inside a closed vehicle. If a hearing aid gets wet it should never be blow-dried, placed in an oven or microwave, or left to sit in the sun to dry out. **First line of defence for a wet hearing aid:** a small, air-tight container of dry uncooked rice. Place the aid in the container with the aid battery door open (remove the battery), seal the container, and let it sit for at least 24 hours. If a hearing aid drying kit is available, use it as soon as possible. In fact, most hearing aid manufacturers now recommend that all hearing aids be stored in a drying kit nightly to maximize the life of the electronics inside hearing aids.

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