

**May is Hearing Awareness Month - Canadians of All Ages Urged to Become Hear Smart**  
**Tips to Reduce Noise-Induced Hearing Loss**

**April 29, 2016 Toronto ON:** Canadians are exposed to dangerous sound levels on a regular basis that can result in hearing loss. Noise-induced hearing loss is becoming a growing health-related issue, especially for younger Canadians. The May 2016 *Hearing Awareness Month* should serve as a reminder that the ability to hear is a gift – a sensory experience that must be valued and protected.

“Though hearing loss is a common health problem and often develops with age, there is an increase in noise-induced hearing loss caused by continuous or repeated exposure to loud noises. Younger ears are particularly susceptible to loud noise and more vulnerable to subsequent hearing loss later in life,” noted Leslie Holden, Chair of the Canadian Hearing Instrument Practitioners Society Board of Directors. “Noise is one of the greatest threats to hearing – but it is preventable and is largely within our control. It is therefore important for people to recognize noise hazards and take steps to protect their hearing.”

Noise exposure occurs in the workplace, in social and recreational settings and at home. Sports and concert venues, televisions, personal music devices, power tools, lawn mowers, hair dryers, kitchen appliances, and video games are common, high-risk sources of prolonged loud noises in our everyday lives that may be damaging our hearing. Even a very slight hearing loss can have an effect on your quality of life – the way you work, play and socialize.

To reduce the risk of noise-induced hearing loss:

- Lower the volume—on smartphones, personal music devices, and other audio devices.
- Limit the duration and volume when using earbuds and headphones.
- Use ear protection equipment such as ear muffs or ear plugs if you work or play in a noisy environment.
- Use ear protection at concerts and sporting events.
- Do not insert objects, such as cotton swabs, into your ears or your children’s ears.
- Insist on the use of ear protection for children/youth.
- Be a role model - teach your child/children the value of hearing and how loud noises can harm their ability to hear.
- Be **Hear Smart** – have your hearing checked on a regular basis.

**For additional information, please contact:**

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