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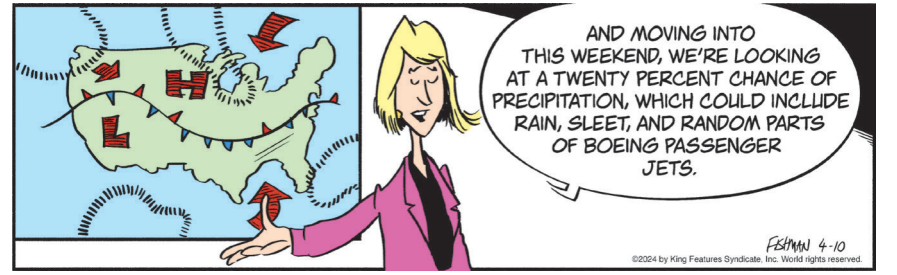
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By Loren Fishman



SUNDAY, LOCAL COMMENTARY | MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY, POLITICAL OPINION | WEDNESDAY, HEALTH & WELLNESS ADVICE | SATURDAY, POSITIVE LIVING

A VIEW FROM THE VILLAGES HEALTH

After evaluating your hearing loss your hearing care professional selects and programs hearing aids to match your needs. Quality, well-fitted hearing aids can significantly improve your quality of life.



Dr. Al Turri

COMMENTARY

They can enhance communication, provide a sense of control and reduce the risk of depression and anxiety as well as cognitive decline. Left untreated, these symptoms can lead to poor overall health and increased mortality risk.

Some hearing aid users experience what I call "In the Drawer" syndrome, where they perceive little benefit from their hearing aids after initially positive outcomes, leading them to end up unused. This adds to the stigma that hearing aids are ineffective and costly. The International Journal of Audiology reports that 4.7% to 24% of people initially fitted with

hearing aids do not wear them, highlighting the need for life-long care plans beyond just the initial adoption and adaptation phases.

Long-term success with hearing aids relies on evidence-based, routine follow-up care. Maintenance services and products ensure proper functioning, addressing issues like debris removal and moisture elimination to maintain performance and prevent repairs. Periodic adjustments accommodate changes in hearing loss over time.

If you've followed my patient education series, you're familiar with discussions about hearing loss signs, its effects on memory and cognition, and the reduced quality of life it brings when untreated.

Today, we'll focus on the awareness and impact of moisture on hearing aids, the primary reason they may not function optimally, require repairs, or end up unused.

Here are a few new and captivating data points derived from a recent capstone project completed at a top-10 Audiology doctoral program in the United States:

» 12.5% of brand-new hearing aids increased by 5 dB or greater after complete moisture removal.

» 31% of hearing aids believed to be working adequately improved by >5dB after complete moisture removal.

» 24% of all devices that improved by 5dB or greater also experienced >3dB difference in microphone output deltas pre vs. post complete moisture removal.

» 67% of all dead receivers were fully recovered after complete moisture removal.

This study used 106 real patient visits, Real Ear Measurements (REM) and pre-and-post performance impact by component. Redux moisture removal technology was used in these studies to remove all moisture and quantify the amount of moisture present within the hearing aid(s).

The Villages Health Audiology team offers Redux complete moisture removal services to all patients during clinic visits. With Redux treatment, hearing aid users experience improvement 78% of the time, indicating that only 22% of our patients have

optimal performing hearing aids upon arrival due to moisture. Additionally, dry hearing aids ensure programming accuracy when a patient's hearing loss changes, maintaining consistent performance.

Redux is an invaluable tool for optimizing your hearing aid experience beyond purchase, but it's just the beginning. Despite the stark performance improvement with each Redux treatment, moisture quickly returns over the following weeks due to various factors.

These include the need for hearing aids to process sound in moist air, concealed condensation when the hearing aid enters the ear at a lower temperature, and the hygroscopic nature of hearing aid bodies, which allows moisture to pass through them despite water-resistant or waterproof ratings.

Thankfully, Redux has introduced the Redux Home model for consumers to combat moisture accumulation at home, offering proactive care. This dryer is highly recommended for patients who meet any of the following criteria:

» The patient wears their

hearing aids all day.

» They experience soft, unclear, muffled sounds or intermittency.

» The patient has a history of frequent repairs.

» More than 1.5 uL (microliters) was removed during their clinical visit.

» The patient experiences increased perspiration due to sweat, physical activity, hot/humid conditions, or being overweight.

Patients can visit our clinics for Redux treatments or use the Redux Home Dryer to manage moisture between visits. Although not suitable for every patient, the Redux Home Dryer is a strong recommendation for most, enhancing long-term hearing aid performance and outcomes by addressing the primary reason for suboptimal performance.

For more information on The Villages Health's Audiology services, call us at: 352-604-5868 or register for one of our hearing seminars at thevillageshealth.com/aud-edu.

Dr. Al Turri is the director of audiology at The Villages Health.

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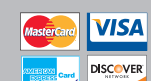
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