

Your COVID-19 Hearing Loss Guide

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My Hearing Loss Story

- Genetic hearing loss with adult onset
- Struggled to accept my own hearing loss
- Needed to break cycle of shame for my children
- Now a passionate advocate, writer, & speaker
- Vice Chair of the National Board of HLAA
- Founder of LivingWithHearingLoss.com

Hearing Loss Can Be Socially Isolating

- This is true in normal times
- Conversation takes effort and can be exhausting
- Communication best practices are not always utilized
- Accessibility options are often limited
- That is why HLAA and similar groups are so important
- How can we cope when social isolation is mandated for all?

Establish A Daily Routine

1	Maintain a regular wake-up time and bedtime
2	Eat at set mealtimes rather than continuous snacking
3	Exercise at least once a day but get up and move around regularly
4	Set aside time for productive work
5	Schedule time for self-care like meditation, listening to music, reading a book

Reach Out to Loved Ones & Friends

1	“Socially distanced, spiritually connected.” — Andrew Cuomo, Governor of NY
2	Commit to connecting with at least one person a day
3	Talking on the phone can be challenging but many options do exist
4	Use Skype or FaceTime for video calls to help with lipreading
5	Use a captioned landline phone or Innocaption; Skype also has captions

Learn Something New

1	Use your extra time wisely and keep your brain active
2	Free online classes at classcentral.com from leading universities with captioned videos
3	Take a virtual museum tour, enjoy an online art collection or music concerts
4	Read a book and discuss via virtual book club
5	Tackle that project you have been putting off for lack of time

Keep Moving

1	Maintain your exercise routine or start a new one
2	Free online classes and YouTube videos in many styles
3	Your yoga studio or gym may be offering live streamed classes
4	Take a walk daily if you can do this while still social distancing
5	Use your fitness tracker or Apple Watch to remind you to move

Review Your Emergency Plans

1	Make sure you have plenty of extra batteries on hand and that they are charged
2	Order food, medicines and other necessities via delivery when possible
3	Understand how to contact your doctor / pharmacist / banker remotely
4	Keep a bag packed and ready in case you need to seek medical treatment
5	Update all medical notes/documents to include details like no MRIs for CI users

Prepare a Medical Communication Kit

1	If you need medical assistance, call ahead first
2	Bring your go bag which includes your devices, batteries, and chargers
3	Include other assistive listening devices like speech-to-text apps, paper & pen or ALDs
4	Print signs to hang in your room or buttons to alert medical staff to your hearing loss
5	Alert doctors immediately about your hearing problems, and remind them as needed

Manage Your Hearing Health

1	Take an inventory of your hearing aid batteries and replenish your supply; CI users make sure you have a back-up battery or two on hand
2	Explore Telehealth options with your audiologist
3	Check if your audiologist offers curbside service
4	Consider a back-up device
5	Stay connected with your hearing loss peers

Helpful Resources

<https://www.chadruffinmd.com/blog/2020/3/15/covid-19-and-hard-of-hearing>

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-loss-time-of-coronavirus>

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/technology/phones-mobile-devices>

<https://www.hearingtracker.com/news/accessibility-strategies-for-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-people-in-remote-meetings>

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/communities/patients/>

<https://masseyandear.org/specialties/audiology-resources>

<https://journals.lww.com/thehearingjournal/blog/breakingnews/pages/post.aspx?PostID=364>

Connect with Shari

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What Is Working for You?

- Our community is strongest when we share with one another
- Your suggestions
- Technology ideas
- Resources to share
- Audiologist perspective