

Q & A With Your Audiologists

By: Dana Manolache and Wendy Tat

Question: I would like to get a hearing test. Could you tell me about the advantages and disadvantages of having my test done in the private sector (as opposed to public)?

This is a good question and one many people ask us about. Whether it be for a hearing test or to get help for your tinnitus, vertigo, or other ear-related issues, the main advantage of consulting an audiologist in the private sector is the speed with which you can obtain an appointment. Hospitals usually have long waiting lists, whereas it is possible to get an appointment more quickly at most private clinics. This is particularly advantageous for people who are bothered by their hearing health issues, as it allows them to have quicker access to services and help in a timely manner. In addition, you do not need a medical referral to consult an audiologist in the private sector,

whereas a referral is necessary when consulting in the public sector. Some private clinics offer multidisciplinary services under the same roof (ENT doctors, audiologists, hearing aid acousticians), which is another advantage, since it reduces the client's travel and helps ensure more effective follow-ups.

Since the audiology services offered in private practice are not covered by Medicare, clients must pay out-of-pocket, which may be considered a disadvantage to some people. However, certain insurance plans cover audiology services, which may result in lower out-of-pocket fees for beneficiaries.

About us

Wendy and Dana are audiologists at Solutions Santé Westmount. They offer various services including hearing and communication needs assessment, and the evaluation of tinnitus, noise induced hearing loss, and other ear-related symptoms.

Dana Manolache



I became involved with Hear Québec during my first year as a student in Audiology at the University of Montréal. The experience I gained through volunteering at Hear Québec and at the Geriatric Institute of Montreal provided me with enriching perspectives on my profession. I firmly believe in the importance of offering my patients an environment of warmth, respect, understanding, transparency and communication.

DANA

Question: I scheduled my hearing test with an audiologist. What can I expect during my appointment?

When you first meet your audiologist, she/he will begin by asking you questions about any ear-related symptoms, like hearing loss, ear infections, ringing in the ears, dizziness or vertigo. You may also be asked about your history of noise exposure, your medical history or medications taken. It is not unusual to be asked questions about your general health as certain medical conditions and medications can put you at higher risk for hearing loss or other ear-related symptoms. Finally, your audiologist will ask specific questions about your ear-related difficulties and communication needs.

The next step of your consultation will involve a visual inspection of your ear canals to make sure they are free from wax or other obstructions that could have an impact on the test. Having some wax in your ears is normal, but when there is an excess amount present, it can block your ear canal and result in a temporary hearing loss. If your audiologist notices excess wax, she/he may remove it for you, or refer you to an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) doctor to have it removed.

Once the visual inspection is complete, the audiologist will perform different tests to evaluate your middle ear and inner ear functions. These may include a pressure test to determine if your eardrum moves well, a tone test where you will be asked to press a button when you hear a sound, and a speech test where you will be asked to repeat words. Your audiologist may perform additional tests, depending on your difficulties, needs, and the reason for consultation.

Once the testing is complete, your audiologist will explain the results and make his/her recommendations. It is important to remember that two individuals with the same audiogram may have very different day-to-day difficulties. Therefore, your audiologist's recommendations will not only be based on the test results, but they will also be heavily influenced by your personal communication needs.

Wendy Tat



As well as being an audiologist, I am currently working as a researcher at the Research Center of the Geriatric Institute of Montreal (IUGM) on a video format training program on hearing aids and communication strategies to help healthcare professionals interact more efficiently with hearing-impaired patients. I strive to provide high quality services in a compassionate and comfortable environment.

WENDY

Question: My audiologist recommended hearing aids, but I'm not sure if I correctly understand the steps involved in obtaining them. How does it work exactly?

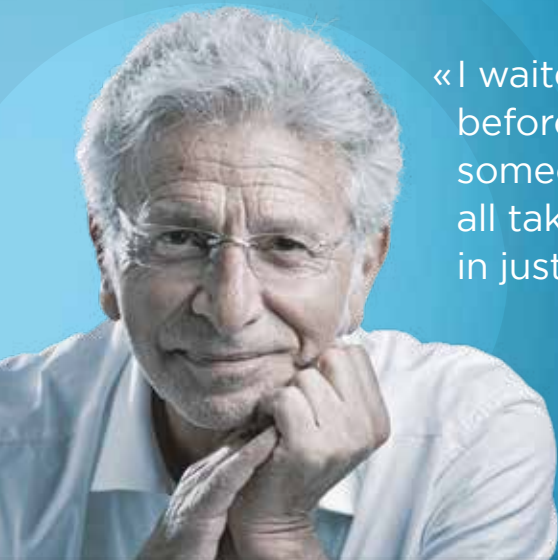
Once you have your hearing test results and your audiological report, you can obtain your hearing aids through the private sector by simply scheduling an appointment with the hearing aid acoustician of your choice.

Some clients are eligible to obtain one or two hearing aids through the RAMQ. Your audiologist will inform you if this is your case. The steps to obtain hearing aids through the RAMQ are the following:

1. Appointment in audiology for a hearing evaluation (you will be given an audiological report).
2. Appointment with an ENT doctor to obtain a medical certificate.
3. Appointment with an acoustician to obtain your hearing aids: it is very important to bring copies of your audiological report and ENT medical certificate to your acoustician.

Some clients are also eligible to obtain one or two hearing aids through the CNESST if their ear-related difficulties are related to their past or current work. The steps to obtain hearing aids through the CNESST are:

1. Appointment in audiology for a hearing evaluation (you will be given an audiological report).
2. Appointment with an ENT doctor to open a CNESST file if judged pertinent.
3. Fill out the Appendix to the Worker's Claim: Occupational Disease-Deafness and the Worker's Claim form and send them to the CNESST.
4. A letter will be sent to you by mail from the CNESST stating whether you are recognized as having an occupational hearing loss.
5. Appointment with an acoustician to obtain your hearing aids.



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