

**Audiology and
Hearing Aid
Center, Ltd.**

Scottsdale Medical Building
3271 N. Civic Center Plaza, Ste. 4
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

*Your Hear & Now
newsletter has arrived!*

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You Are **CORDIALLY INVITED** to a...

FREE Educational Luncheon Seminar!

Presented and Hosted by
Audiology and Hearing Aid Center and
the Widex Hearing Aid Company
with special guest Donna Brozowski,
a technology specialist from Widex.

The presentation will cover the latest advancements in digital hearing aid technology, including how the use of directional microphones integrated with feedback cancellation and noise reduction features in the **Widex Senso Diva** are now **clinically proven** to help people hear better in more challenging listening situations such as background noise.

Come and learn more about this important clinical study.

An excellent opportunity to have your important questions answered!

JOIN US —EITHER—

Thursday, February 12th, 2004
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

At The Mustang Library Auditorium
10101 N. 90th St.

Reservations required by February 10th
(480) 451-0220, —OR—

Monday, February 23rd, 2004
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

At The Civic Center Library Auditorium
3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd.

Reservations required by February 20th
(480) 941-0519

BE SURE TO SPECIFY WHICH SEMINAR DATE YOU WILL BE ATTENDING.

**BATTERY
SALE**



Buy **two** packs,
get **one** pack

FREE

All sizes available

Expires March 15, 2004



**PRE-SPRING
Tune-Up Special**

\$39.95!!

Includes hearing screening,
video otoscopy exam and
hearing aid evaluation,
reprogramming, if necessary,
cleaning and in-office repairs.

Appointment required.

Expires March 15, 2004



For your convenience, we offer walk-in hours Monday through Friday, when an audiologist will be available to clean and check your hearing aids and earmolds, change battery doors, and perform minor repairs. If your hearing aid needs adjustment, please call to make an appointment.

Walk-in hours for:

Civic Center Office
12 - 1 pm
Monday - Friday

North Scottsdale Office
12 - 1 pm
Monday - Friday

We thank the Widex Hearing Aid Company for their support and assistance in preparing this newsletter.

Hear & Now

Audiology and Hearing Aid Center News

Winter 2004

IN THIS ISSUE

CATHY'S COLUMN

INSURANCE UPDATE

MEDICARE UPDATE

DRY & STORE GLOBAL

GUEST COLUMN

YOU ARE INVITED!
LUNCHEON SEMINAR



Cathy's Column

Do you want to improve your speech understanding in noise?

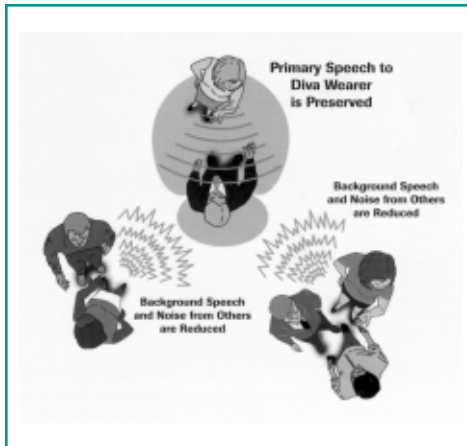
Do any of these situations apply to the way your current hearing aid system works for you? While watching your favorite TV show, movie or sports game, have you noticed the volume is so loud that others have to raise their voices to talk to you and each other? Do you strain to hear soft sounds or cringe at the playful screeches of your grandchildren because they are too loud? Or, while eating dinner at your favorite restaurant with others, do you find yourself wishing that your old-style hearing aids adjusted more accurately for volume and reverberant background noise?

Understanding speech in noisy environments, such as restaurants, is perhaps the greatest challenge a hearing aid wearer faces. It is, in

many cases, the ultimate test of a hearing instrument. Widex, the manufacturer of fully digital hearing instruments, has announced the results of a recent clinical study that shows Senso Diva, their premier digital hearing instrument, automatically improves speech understanding in noise.*

The research study, conducted at a prestigious U.S. university and at the Widex research center in Chicago, conclusively demonstrated how the advanced Diva improves hearing in quiet and noisy situations, at distances, in music, and on the

telephone. A detailed summary of the study is available in our offices, but a highlight includes: Twenty adult subject-patients participated, all with mild to moderate hearing losses. The subjects, who all wore



continued on inside - Cathy's Column

Power Diva as seen on ABC's Extreme Makeover!

Cynthia, a severely hearing impaired woman who was recently a patient on ABC's *Extreme Makeover*, received among other physical enhancements an upgrade in her ability to hear more clearly. As part of her makeover, she was fit with the new **Senso Diva Power** hearing instrument by Widex. This feature showed a national audience how a hearing loss can negatively impact a person's life—and how the combination of experienced hearing healthcare professionals and premier digital hearing instruments can help make a significant difference.



*If you want the best,
and nothing but the best...*

Ask About

Impressive features include:

- 15-channel sound processing
- Advanced feedback cancellation
- Revolutionary noise reduction system
- Fully automatic, 100% digital signal processing
- Directional Intelligence™ with Diva Locator
- Advanced dual microphone technology (available on most models).

Digital Hearing Aids Worth Asking About!



Scottsdale

(480) 941-0519

3271 N. Civic Center Plaza
Suite 4

Phoenix

(480) 941-0519

5040 N. 15th Avenue
Suite 408

North Scottsdale

(480) 451-0220

9777 N. 91st Street
Suite 101

You may visit us
on the Internet at
www.azahac.com

Audiologists at the Audiology & Hearing Aid Center are certified (CCC-A) by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Cathy Kurth, Au.D., FAAA • Kristin Wells, M.A., FAAA • Kim Gates, M.C.D., CCC-A • Cara Lefkowitz M.S., CCC-A

analog or programmable hearing aids, were unaware of the purpose of the study. Diva provided more benefit in speech understanding in noisy and reverberant environments than the subject's hearing aids.

As many of our patients know, we respect Widex hearing aid technology. The advanced noise reduction system in the Diva constantly analyzes incoming sounds in all 15 of its independent channels in order to better distinguish between speech and noise. The clinical study also demonstrated that the unique Diva Locator™ feature, combined with advanced dual microphone technology and digital signal processing, improved speech understanding in noise.

If you find it a challenge to hear in noisy situations, as so many hearing-impaired people do with or without their hearing aids, then we challenge you and your old-style aids to come in for a demonstration of the performance of the clinically proven Senso Diva 100% digital hearing instrument. Come hear the digital difference the Diva could make for you!

***Details of the clinical studies available upon request. Individual results may vary.**

Ask About Dry & Store Global™



Manufacturers of the Dry & Store Global have recently reported a high level of satisfaction from audiologists and their patients around the Globe, pun intended.

Like its sister, the much larger Dry and Store™ unit, the Global “dries” and “stores”

your hearing aids while sanitizing them for freshness. It also kills bacteria on your hearing aids that can cause damage and a costly repair, and prevents sound intermittency due to moisture and earwax buildup. Now you have a choice of two state-of-the-art drying devices: the larger Dry & Store for around the house or the new, travel-size Global for your trips.

GLOBAL FEATURES INCLUDE:

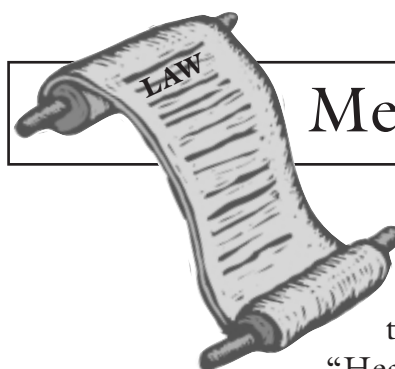
- ▶ **Activated carbon in the desiccant to keep your hearing aids fresh-smelling**
- ▶ **Utilizes several technologies to release, evaporate and capture even the tiniest molecules of moisture—including the moisture in earwax—resulting in a significant reduction in repairs**
- ▶ **Dual voltage to meet worldwide electrical needs**
- ▶ **Easy to use one-button operation**
- ▶ **Two-year warranty**
- ▶ **May extend battery life by keeping your hearing aids free of damaging moisture.**

A LETTER TO ONE OF OUR AUDIOLOGISTS...

Dear Kristin:

Thank you very much for introducing me to the Widex Diva hearing instrument and especially for suggesting I try the behind-the-ear model. These hearing aids have opened up a world of sound that I have not heard for many years. All of a sudden my wife speaks clearly and her diction has greatly improved. More importantly, my own voice is decidedly more natural than it was with my old-style hearing aids. The new features: volume control, dual microphones, and the off-on switch just adds to the pleasure of wearing these instruments. I could rave on but the proof is in the wearing, and in the hearing! I just want to express my appreciation for your knowledge and professionalism in recommending to me a high-quality hearing instrument.

Bill T.



Medicare Update

Federal legislation has been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, known as the “Hearing Health Accessibility Act of 2003” (H.R. Bill 2821 and S. 1647), that would allow Medicare patients direct access to audiologists for diagnostic hearing and balance tests. Currently, you need a physician's referral for a hearing test. The vast majority of hearing loss (80-90%) is not medically or surgically treatable; however, testing by an audiologist is almost always necessary to determine the nature and extent of hearing loss. When conditions exist that do require medical attention, audiologists have the knowledge and tools to identify them and to make the proper medical referral.

If the bill passes, you would no longer be required to obtain a note from your doctor for a hearing test. Other legislation has been introduced that would give Medicare patients a \$500 tax credit per ear on the purchase of new hearing instruments.

We need your help! We are strongly supporting both bills and asking our patients to do the same by sending letters to their Congressmen or Congresswomen and their Senators. Sample letters are available in our office. Over the next few months we will be giving patients who visit our office the opportunity to sign and send a letter of support for this important legislation.

Guest Column:

Have You PRUNED Your NEURONS Lately?



by Kristin Wells

Whether you know it or not, recent research shows that you have! The human brain is an amazing and adaptable computer system that is constantly changing. It was once thought that a baby was born with all the brain cells it would ever have or need. Now, we know that our brain undergoes an adaptation process throughout our lives that scientists call neuroplasticity. Research indicates that the human brain continuously prunes out neurons that are no longer being used, a process called arborization, and grows new neurons where they are needed, another process called neurogenesis.

So, what does all this big talk have to do with hearing aids? First, it helps us to better answer the age-old question; "Can't I just try ONE hearing aid first and see if that works?" Well, it seems that humans were designed with TWO ears for several good reasons, including the ability to locate a sound and the ability to hear in the presence of background noise. We actually hear with our brains...the ears are just the funnels that collect the sound and send it up for processing. The neurons that connect the ears to the brain form a vast and complicated network that crosses over from one ear to the opposite side of the brain, and back again. Therefore, if you choose to use just one hearing aid when you need two, you are only stimulating a portion of the brain needed to process sound and putting yourself at risk for some unwanted neural pruning.

Another implication of these research findings indicates that waiting "until your hearing gets bad enough for hearing aids" when you actually need them now, may set you up for failure with hearing aids in the future. A study done in 2001 by Futai, et al., showed that stimulation of the brain by sound regulates and improves the neurons' abilities to efficiently transmit the signals over time, whereas a lack of sound stimulation decreases the transmission efficiency. It's that old "use it or lose it" theory. The human brain makes use of what it gets and prunes out the rest.

The bottom line is that if you are not hearing properly, your hearing needs to be enhanced now and from both ears. Waiting too long for help and deciding to help only one ear can cause neuroplasticity changes in your central auditory nervous system that you may regret later. Ask an audiologist today how you can get help to make the most of the hearing you have!

Sources: Eriksson et al., 1998 *Nature Medicine* 4, 1313-1317, Futai et al., 2001, *Journal of Neuroscience* 21, 3342-3349, Kalil 1989, *Scientific American*, 76-85, Teri J. Bellis, 2003, *Assessment & Management of Central Auditory Processing Disorders*, 2nd Ed.

Introducing...

Two new low-cost digital hearing aids from two leading manufacturers

Amio™ by Phonak

A basic digital hearing instrument that features five channels of digital signal processing and noise cancellation. The Amio is equipped with mini-zoom directional capabilities.

The GNResound Air™

A high-performance digital hearing instrument specifically designed for high frequency hearing losses. The AIR's unique venting system keeps the ear canal open, allowing a comfortable fit with no plugged-up feeling.

Introductory pricing available.

Amio and Air hearing instruments are recommended for specific hearing loss levels and may not be appropriate for other hearing losses. Your audiologist can explain the benefits and whether you qualify.

Call to find out more.

Insurance Update

Participant Provider for

AETNA US Healthcare AHCCCS	Humana Choice Care PPO
AZ Hearcare Network	Medicare
AZ Pipe Traders Health & Welfare Trust Fund	Motorola Health Advantage Plan
Bashas'	ON Semiconductor
BCBSAZ	Pacificare
BCBSMI	Preferred One
Catholic Healthcare West	Scottsdale Healthcare (Benesight formally the TPA)
CHAMPUS	State Compensation Fund
CIGNA-Indemnity/PPO	United Food & Commercial Workers
Conseco Medical	United Healthcare (Empire, Indemnity, N.A., Conexant)
CSA Benefits	United Healthcare of AZ
Federal Mogul Healthcare System	US Healthcare
General American Insurance Co.	Washington Elementary Schools
Healthnet	
Hear PO	
Hearing Choice	

... and many others.