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Noise-induced hearing loss

What is Noise induced Hearing loss?

Exposure to high noise levels can cause permanent hearing damage, often without the sufferer being aware of it until it is too late. It may lead to tinnitus (ringing in the ears) or deafness.

Exposure to many different sources of noise (e.g. Loud music, harvesters, chainsaws, powered hand tools, industrial machinery) has a cumulative effect and can cause damage, even if you are only exposed to a single source for short periods of time. Noise can also be a safety hazard at work, interfering with communication and making warnings harder to hear. It's estimated that more than 2 million people in Great Britain are exposed to unacceptable levels of noise at work. Hearing loss caused by work is preventable but once hearing has gone it won't come back.

Am I at risk of Noise damage?

You have a noise damage risk if you can answer 'yes' to any of these questions

- Is the noise intrusive for most of the working day?
- Do you use noisy powered tools or machinery for more half an hour a day?
- Do you have muffled hearing or Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) following nights out at loud nightclubs/discos?

Workers are also at risk if they have muffled hearing at the end of the day, even if it is better by the next morning.

How do I lower the risk of noise damage to my ears?

Limit your exposure time to loud music – try not to raise your headphone volume too high

Spend at least ten minutes in a softer zone at Nightclubs, Concerts or Discos

At Work- **Wear any hearing protection you are given.** Wear it properly (you should be trained how to do this), and wear it all the time you are doing noisy work, and when you are in hearing protection areas. Taking it off even for a short while means that your hearing could still be damaged.

Worried about your hearing?



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See your GP If you have any concerns about your hearing or noise damage and request a hearing test