

Veterans Hearing Loss Facts

In the United States:

- There are **48 million** Americans who have a significant hearing loss. (*2011 National Health Interview Survey*)
- **Tinnitus and hearing loss are the top two service-connected disabilities** among U.S. Veterans. (*Hearing Health Foundation*)
- **Loss of hearing is the number one war wound** among American veterans. Half of all blast-related injuries sustained result in permanent hearing loss for veterans. (*Hearing Loss Association of America*)
- **Over 2.7 million** veterans receive either disability compensation for service-connected hearing disabilities or are in treatment for hearing-related issues. (*Hearing Loss Association of America*)
- Among post-9/11 veterans, 414,000 have come home with hearing loss and tinnitus, or ringing in the ears. (*News 21, 2013*)
- In a 2010 VA report, the VA spent \$218 million on hearing aids for veterans, purchasing one in five hearing aids sold annually in the U.S. (*Center for Public Integrity, 2014*)

In the United States...

- **1 in 3** adults age 65-74 will have a hearing loss. (*National Institute on Aging*)
- **1 in 3** baby boomers will struggle with hearing loss. (*National Institute on Aging*)
- **50%** of adults 75 and older have hearing loss. (*National Institute on Deafness and other Comm. Disorders*)
- **48 million** Americans have a significant hearing loss. (*2011 National Health Interview Survey*)
- **2.7 million** veterans receive disability benefits for hearing loss. (*2011 National Health Interview Survey*)
- **Hearing loss ranks as the third most common health issue** in the country, behind heart disease and arthritis. (*National Institutes of Health*)
- Recent studies conducted by the *National Institute on Aging* reveal a link between **untreated hearing loss and dementia**, as well as a greater incidence of balance problems, falls and stress related diseases such as heart disease and stroke.

Listen to Sample Tinnitus Sounds

The American Tinnitus Association (ATA) has compiled a playlist of the most common tinnitus sounds to provide an example of what tinnitus patients hear on an everyday basis. If you have tinnitus, you can follow this link, <https://www.ata.org/understanding-facts/symptoms> to use a playlist to find the sound that best matches your own condition. You can also share this resource with your primary care provider, audiologist, family, and friends, so they get a sense of the noise in your head.

KCDHH: What We Do

Information & Advocacy:

- Maintains resources, provides information, education, outreach through web, social media, publications, presentations, trainings, workshops and makes referrals to assist consumers.
- Provides assistance/advocacy or makes appropriate referrals to agencies that can offer the best assistance for you and your needs.
- Public access to communication through:
 - Video Phone
 - Computer Website
 - Captioned Telephone

Interpreters:

- Receives and coordinates interpreter requests and captioning services for **state agencies only**
- Provides information to consumers on how to find an interpreter and self-advocate
- Provides information to private and non-state entities on how to find an interpreter, available referral agencies, hiring interpreters directly, billing, etc.

Equipment:

Provides specialized telecommunications equipment (STE) to citizens of the Commonwealth who are deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired or deaf blind at no cost to the consumer.

Some of these phones include:



Amplified
Phones



Landline Phones



Speech Impaired
Phones



Captioned
Phones



Wireless Phones

There is also public access to test telephone equipment at the KCDHH office in Frankfort and several locations across the state. For other locations, visit kcdhh.ky.gov/oea/trydevice.html.

DeaFestival:

- A one-day FREE event for ALL that celebrate the language, art, diversity and talents of the deaf and hard of hearing community.
- DeaFestival gives attendees an opportunity to fully experience and participate in a comprehensive program of cultural enrichment, activities, and artistic performances.
- Everyone who attends has the opportunity to immerse themselves in a world of visual wonders and gain a better awareness about the deaf and hard of hearing community.

