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**Austin Auditory
SPECIALISTS**



SUMMER 2022

At Austin Auditory Specialists we have been expanding our team. Read on to meet our expert audiology team!



Tracy Armstrong, M.A., CCC-A

Director of Audiology

Tracy is the director of audiology, and she primarily sees patients in the Austin office. Tracy is passionate about educating patients about emergent research in the field of hearing loss and cognition. She believes that helping people hear is a combination of appropriate technology, guidance, listening and empathy.



Chelsea Aji, Au.D., CCC-A

Audiologist

Chelsea is a doctor of audiology in our Austin office. Chelsea deeply believes in the power of communication and the profound impact of human connection. She is honored to work with patients throughout their hearing journey, aiding in their improved connection with the world and their overall quality of life.



Danielle Jorgenson, Au.D., CCC-A

Audiologist

Danielle received her doctorate in audiology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2021. She believes that every patient is unique and deserves a customized approach to hearing care. Her favorite part of working as an audiologist is building personal relationships with her patients as she learns about their individual communication needs and challenges.



Margaret Dean, Ph.D., CCC-A

Audiologist

Margaret attended Texas A&M University and obtained her master's and Ph.D. in audiology from the University of Texas in 2000. She understands how untreated hearing loss can impact an individual on a daily basis, as well as their loved ones. She is passionate about applying her knowledge and experience to improve and expand people's lives with better hearing.



Laura De La Cruz

Audiology Coordinator

Laura is the glue that helps us help our patients. Laura works out of the Austin office, but she answers phones at both the Austin and the Cedar Park offices. Laura always has a smile on her face and is ALWAYS willing to help patients in any way that she can. If you need an appointment, need some quick help with your hearing aids, have an insurance question or want to get a message to one of our audiologists, Laura can help!



Keeping Your Hearing Devices ON FOR HEALTHIER HEARING

While most patients diagnosed with hearing loss are eager to treat it, others question the need for improved hearing since they live a quiet and private lifestyle. At Austin Auditory Specialists, we often find ourselves faced with questions such as, "I live alone and don't go out much—why would I need hearing devices?" or "What is the point of hearing if no one else is around?"

These same arguments also come from "part-time" hearing device patients who choose to only wear their hearing devices for family gatherings and social engagements.

Why Wear Hearing Devices?

A new study helps support existing evidence that wearing hearing devices can help slow cognitive decline in elderly patients.¹ Because our brains are designed to hear sound and process it throughout our day, denying even soft environmental sounds robs our brain of important opportunities to process and relearn sound. Over time, untreated hearing loss may result in inadequate brain stimulation, leading to cognitive decline.

The study also revealed that patients who wear hearing devices are less likely to be depressed and more likely to be socially engaged and self-confident in their communication abilities. Social engagement and physical activity help stave off cognitive decline and dementia.

Therefore, it is essential that those with hearing loss wear hearing devices all day, every day—regardless of their lifestyle.

How We Can Help

If challenges with your hearing devices prevent you from wearing them all day, schedule an appointment with Austin Auditory Specialists to troubleshoot the issue. Consistent hearing device use is not only important to your hearing health but to your cognitive health as well!

Fit and Follow-Up: Key Components in Hearing Device User Satisfaction

Buying hearing devices isn't like buying a flat-screen TV. Hearing devices are not just electronic devices—they're a rehabilitative treatment that requires a long-term commitment to their use. Understanding this fact, and that fit and follow-up are equally as important as the hearing device itself, will go a long way toward increasing your satisfaction with your purchase. That is why the hearing professional you choose is so important. Their skills in programming, fitting and follow-up counseling are keys to your successful adjustment to hearing devices.

Fitting: The programming of your new hearing devices should not only reflect the results of your audiogram; it should also replicate your personal preferences to ensure your hearing is natural sounding and optimal. Tests should be completed during the fitting phase to verify that speech understanding has improved. In other words, improvement in overall communication effectiveness should be the ultimate goal of the fitting process.

FOLLOW-UP: Follow-up care plays a crucial role in your level of satisfaction. In the July 2009 Consumer Reports article "Hear Well in a Noisy World," the author points out how critical it is that the audiologist explains what you should expect during the adjustment period. They should also:

- Demonstrate how to insert and remove the battery.
- Review how to clean and store the device.
- Help you practice putting the device into your ear.
- Help you practice using all switches and controls.
- Help you practice using the telephone while wearing it.

Additionally, your audiologist should set a follow-up appointment within a few weeks of receiving your hearing devices and outline a routine care and maintenance schedule. This maintenance schedule should include clearly defined daily cleaning processes, suggestions for extending battery life, six-month clean-and-check appointments and an annual hearing test to gauge your hearing health and whether or not your hearing devices need to be reprogrammed.

