

Winter Update

In the News:

United Healthcare recently released information to consumers regarding a hearing aid benefit to Medicare program enrollees for the 2012 calendar year. The program specified that hearing aids can be purchased through their exclusive internet provider Hearing Innovations. The plan only allows for hearing aids to be purchased online. The benefit does not apply should the consumer wish to see a hearing healthcare professional. The Audiologists of Professional Hearing Services would like you to be informed of the controversy that this benefit has raised in the medical community.

Many organizations including: Academy of Dispensing Audiologist (ADA), American Academy of Audiology (AAA), International Hearing Society (IHS), The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) and American Speech, Language, Hearing Association (ASHA) have released statements advising consumers to the potential risks of purchasing hearing aids online. Some of these organizations have raised concerns that Hearing Innovations may not be in compliance with FDA regulations for the marketing of hearing aids. They also suggest that the company may be violating most, if not all, state licensing laws.

In a recent press release dated 10/13/11, "The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) is warning consumers of the inherent risks associated with purchasing over-the-counter, one-size-fits-all hearing aids instead of consulting a hearing healthcare professional. Hearing loss is sometimes the symptom of a serious underlying medical problem. All 50 states require that consumers use a credentialed hearing care professional to purchase hearing aids."

BHI also points out that hearing devices that are purchased over-the-counter or through the Internet without the consultation of a hearing healthcare professional may result in the devices not being accurately customized to the specific hearing needs of the individual.

The Audiologists of Professional Hearing Services hope you have found this information to be helpful. We advise you to use caution should you decide to purchase your devices online. We strongly believe that your hearing healthcare needs can only be achieved through education, counseling, and hearing solutions that occur through face to face interaction with your audiologist. We

wish you success in your journey to better hearing. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact us at 262-549-5150. Additional information can be found in our Consumer Guideline to Purchasing Hearing Aids brochure which is available on our website at www.professionalarhearingservices.com.



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Dr. Jennifer Johnson, her husband, Tony and daughter, Lydia welcomed Nolan James into their family on November 17th.

He weighed 9 lbs 3 oz and was 21 in long.

We congratulate Dr. Johnson and her family and look forward to her return on January 9th.

Interesting Facts

Human Hearing:

- Both the smallest muscle and the smallest bone in the human body are in the ears. The muscle is called the *stapedius*, and paralysis of this muscle can cause hyperacusis. This condition causes normal sounds to appear extremely loud.
- The smallest bone is called the *stapes* or stirrup bone, and plays an integral part in the hearing process.
- Earwax production is necessary for good ear health. While many people find earwax to be disgusting, it's actually a very important part of your ear's defense system. It protects the delicate inner ear from bacteria, fungus, dirt, and even insects. It also cleans and lubricates the ear canal.
- Ears not only help you hear, but also aid in balance.
- Your nose and ears continue growing throughout your entire life.
- Mammals are the only animals with flaps around the ears.
- Vincent van Gogh did not cut off his ear. He only cut off a small portion of his ear lobe.



Animal and Insect Hearing:

- Lobsters know that they are the right way up underwater by keeping sand in their ears. Gravity keeps it at the bottom of their ears. Researchers once replaced the sand with iron filings and used a magnet to move them around, fooling the lobsters into flipping upside down.
- Spiders do not have ears at all, and instead hear through tiny hairs on their legs. This isn't as strange as it sounds, as inside human ears approximately 15,000 tiny hairs allow us to hear a whisper from many feet away.
- Male mosquitoes hear with thousands of tiny hairs growing on their antennae.
- The blue whale can produce sounds up to 188 decibels. This is the loudest sound produced by a living animal and has been detected as far away as 530 miles.
- A giraffe can clean its ear with its 21-inch tongue.

