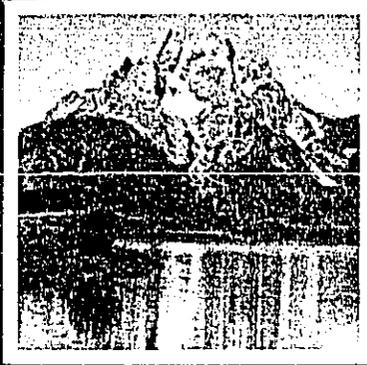


THINK QUIETLY ABOUT NOISE



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What is noise?

Noise is **ANY** sound, loud or soft, which makes us irritable, angry, listless, or unable to sleep.

Ringing in the ears, headaches, temporary difficulty in hearing, and pain in the ears are some side effects of excessive noise.

Noise is any unwanted sound.

People do not get used to noise—the body continues to react. Noise may produce high blood pressure, faster heart rates, and increased adrenaline. Noise may contribute to heart and circulatory disease.

Individuals with hearing impairment may experience isolation in work, play, and school situations. Learning becomes difficult, relationships can become strained, and emotional upsets can occur.

But isn't some noise important?

Yes. Chances are we could not survive without some forms of noise. Railroad crossing signals, horns, and ambulance and police sirens are all important warning sounds in our daily lives. In some situations and in certain moods, loud sounds from concerts, parties, and sports events are enjoyable. However, even these sounds can hurt our hearing.

Noise-induced hearing impairment usually occurs slowly and painlessly. Most people don't notice hearing impairment until it becomes advanced and interferes with communication.

Worst of all—noise induced hearing impairment is permanent.



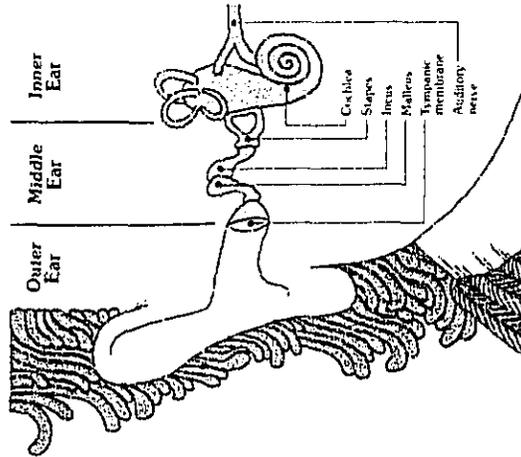
NRTA-AARP Noise Counselling Program

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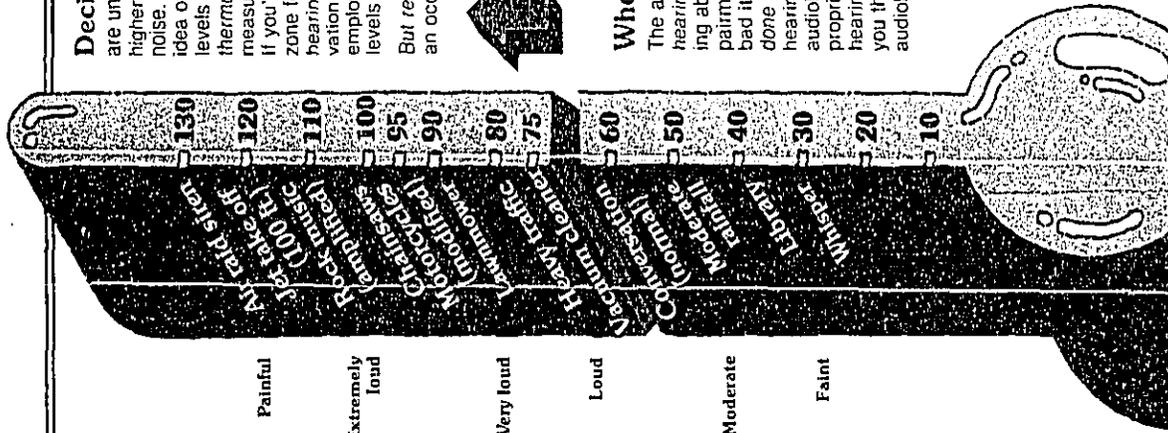
How does our hearing work?

The OUTER EAR acts like a funnel to direct sound waves from the air to the tympanic membrane (eardrum). Sound causes the tympanic membrane to vibrate. These vibrations cause the three bones in the MIDDLE EAR (malleus, incus, and stapes) to move mechanically. The middle ear send these mechanical vibrations to the INNER EAR, where they are picked up by tiny hair cells and sent as electrical impulses along the auditory nerve to the brain.

Noise-induced hearing impairment affects the hair cells in the inner ear. While medicine or surgery can often cure problems in the outer and middle ear, nothing can be done for damage done to the inner ear. Impairment to the nerves in the inner ear is called sensori-neural hearing impairment.



Which of these sounds are you exposed to?



Decibels (dB)

are units of measurement for noise. The higher the decibel level is, the louder the noise. This thermometer can give you an idea of how loud some sounds are. Noise levels (in decibels) indicated on the thermometer are approximate as measured at typical listener's distance. If you're exposed to sounds in the upper zone for a long time, they may harm your hearing, sooner or later. Hearing conservation programs are recommended for all employees in workplaces where noise levels 85dB or greater.

But remember, hearing loss is not solely an occupational hazard.



HARMFUL TO HEARING

Who can help?

The audiologist may give you a complete hearing evaluation to measure your hearing abilities. If you have a hearing impairment, the audiologist will tell you how bad it is, what type it is, and what can be done to help you get along despite a hearing impairment. If you need it, the audiologist may provide you with an appropriate hearing aid or refer you to a hearing aid dealer. The dealer can sell you the hearing aid recommended by the audiologist.