

Hearing Devices and Ear Care in Children and Young Adults

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Use of personal listening devices had tremendously increased in the recent times. The technology for such devices had a quantum leap with the advent of wire-less and blue tooth technology. From cassette players to mobile phone compatible earbuds, the transition has been a drastic one. Health problems posed by these devices are also on the increase. COVID pandemic made us shut inside our room and dependent on these gadgets. The concern for the health hazards caused by these devices need to be addressed.

WHO estimates that 1.1 billion young people worldwide could be at risk of hearing loss due to unsafe listening practices. Nearly half of all teenagers and young adults (12-35 years old)–in middle- and high-income countries are exposed to unsafe levels of sound from the use of personal audio devices¹. Hearing loss due to loud noise was primarily occupational in nature. The risky behavior of use with high volume and prolonged use makes it a real threat to hearing in teenagers and young adults².

Prolonged use of earphones is associated with tinnitus and anxiety/ depressive symptoms³. These devices – earphones, headphones and earbuds are also associated with an increase in ear infections⁴.

Personal listening devices and mobile phones have become an essential commodity in our lives. Regular and overuse of these devices are there for working,

learning or playing purposes. Prolonged use and listening to high volumes definitely increase the hearing threshold as suggested by HUNT cohort study⁵. Awareness among children and young adults need to be increased regarding the use of these devices.

END NOTE

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