

# wellness

## HEARING

### Huh? What's That?

Lucky for teens, you don't have to worry about hearing loss or damage to your ears. You're young. That kind of stuff only strikes older folks. Think again.

#### 50% of Teens Losing Hearing

A 2006 survey by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association found that more than half of high school students have at least one symptom of hearing loss.

The primary culprit? Portable music players used too long at high volumes, which cause hearing loss or tinnitus, where you feel like something's ringing in your ears. And hearing loss brings on other problems, too, like feeling annoyed, having trouble learning, and getting high blood pressure.

#### Most Find Out Too Late

The scary part: this kind of noise-induced hearing loss occurs gradually and is often not noticed until it's too late.

Get the facts. Understand the danger. Then enjoy your music at a volume that will let you listen well for years to come.

"Hearing protection is a sound investment."

— Unknown

### Tune In With Care

Audiologists at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association suggest these hearing-savings tips for using portable music players:

- ✓ Keep the volume down
- ✓ Limit the time you listen
- ✓ Take breaks rather than listening continuously
- ✓ Switch from earbuds to sound-isolating earphones

#### Some other suggestions:

- Caution your friends of the dangers
- Visit [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)

### Protect Your Hearing

If you can't avoid booming noises, protect against them with earplugs or other devices, especially when you're:

- Going to concerts
- At music practices and performances
- Mowing the lawn
- Using a leaf blower
- Using loud saws

#### If earplugs aren't possible, take these steps:

- Decrease the intensity level if you're a musician
- Stand outside the path of amplifiers and speakers
- Rest your ears after loud exposure

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