



by David Glaser, Au.D., CCC-A, FAAA
Doctor of Audiology

HYPERSENSITIVE TO SOUNDS

The term “hyperacusis” is used to describe people who find the sounds of everyday life to be intrusively loud, uncomfortable, and even painful. It is conservatively estimated that about two percent of the population suffers from this problem. A minority of this percentage is severely affected, while the rest report that hyperacusis makes it difficult for them to concentrate or promotes tension or even anger. This hypersensitivity to everyday sounds has been linked with tinnitus (ringing in the ears), migraines, head injury, Lyme disease, William’s syndrome, and Bell’s palsy. It is important that symptoms of hyperacusis be reported and any potentially related medical diagnosis be ascertained. Contrary to common belief, treatment of hyperacusis rests with sound therapy, not earplugs.

TIP OF THE WEEK

Hearing aids in the form of anti hearing aids can be beneficial in controlling all sounds that enter the ear.

P.S. Sound training for treating hyperacusis consists of slowly and gently reintroducing sounds to those who have shut themselves off from the everyday sounds that they find so irritating.

AA-49