



How to Purchase Hearing Aids in Colorado

See an audiologist

The first step to getting help for hearing problems is to see an audiologist. An audiologist is a health professional who specializes in the identification, evaluation, rehabilitation and prevention of a hearing impairment. All audiologists must hold at least a master's degree in audiology and complete a clinical fellowship. The State of Colorado requires that anyone who dispenses hearing aids must be registered with the Department of Regulatory Affairs. You should verify registration by calling 303-894-2464.

What to expect in an exam

After a thorough case history, the person who fits your hearing aid will give you a series of tests that determine the type and extent of your hearing loss and your ability to understand speech. Testing is more accurate if it is done in a sound-treated room. Further testing should also be done after you have been fitted with your hearing aid(s). Comprehensive testing, performed by an audiologist, will assure proper identification of hearing losses that require medical attention by a physician.

One aid vs. two aids

Research indicates that if you have hearing loss in both ears, you will probably hear and understand better with hearing aids in both ears. Following a complete examination, the audiologist will discuss with you what would be best to improve your hearing.

What can hearing aids do for hearing loss?

Today's hearing aids are much more advanced than in previous years. Due to recent improvements in micro-electronics, these instruments are now smaller, lighter and superior in sound quality as compared to older models. Hearing aids are individually made for the shape of your ear and with components to match your hearing loss. They are designed to make speech understandable and other sounds audible. The audiologist will provide hearing aid orientation and training in the use and care of your hearing aids.



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Hearing aid types and styles

Hearing aids are selected by the style and circuitry which is most beneficial for your hearing loss. The complexity and size of the technology necessary to accommodate your hearing loss will also affect the cost of your hearing aids.

Different styles are:

BTE - Behind the ear

ITE - In the ear

ITC - In the canal

CIC - Completely in the canal

The circuitry available in modern hearing aids varies considerably. Each type is generally available in either a classic hearing aid or programmable hearing aid. Programmability allows greater flexibility and more precision to better meet your hearing needs in different environments. Depend on your audiologist to help choose the best type for your listening needs.

Legal protections

It is required by law that within six months prior to purchasing a hearing aid you have a hearing evaluation.

The Federal Food and Drug Administration requires a written statement that the first-time buyer has been examined by a physician and that there are no medical reasons why hearing aids cannot be fitted. You may waive the medical exam if you choose, unless you are under the age of 18.

Under Colorado State Law, hearing aid purchasers must have a 30-day trial period. If, during that time, you decide not to keep the hearing aids, the only fee that is nonrefundable is an itemized amount not to exceed 5% of the sale to cover actual manufacturers' return fees and the cost of custom materials.

If you have any questions concerning yourself or a loved one, ask an audiologist or call

1-800-394-6187, or in Denver call 303-592-1681 for a list of registered audiologists in your area.



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CONSUMER TIPS

- Ask about warranties and loss and damage coverage.
- Avoid aggressive sales tactics.
- Beware of “bait and switch” sales.
- Never buy a hearing aid from a door-to-door salesperson or by mail order.
- Avoid “one size fits all” advertising claims.

Ask to see credentials.

Resources

Center for Hearing, Speech and
Language
4280 Hale Parkway
Denver, Colorado 80220
303/322-1871 Voice/TTY
www.chsl.org

Assistive Technology Partners
601 E. 18th Ave., Suite 130
Denver, CO 80203
303/315-1280 Main
800/255-3477
303-837-8964 TTY
303-837-1208 FAX
www.uchsc.edu/atp

Assistive Technology Partners
Western Slope Technical Assistance
Center (WesTAC)
2897 North Ave., Module 3A
Grand Junction, CO 81501
970/248-0876 Main
970/248-0877 FAX/TTY
www.uchsc.edu/atp



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For more information contact:

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Also available in: Braille, large print, audio tape, disk and alternate language formats

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