

Noise exposure

About this factsheet

This factsheet is part of RNID's **medical** range. It is written for people who have noise-induced hearing loss, or noise induced tinnitus, who would like to know more about their condition. Noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus means hearing loss and tinnitus caused by exposure to loud noise. Tinnitus is the word for noises that some people hear 'in the ears' or 'in the head' – buzzing, ringing, whistling, hissing and other sounds.

You will also find this factsheet useful if you would like to know how to prevent and treat noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus.

In this factsheet we look at:

- How we hear, and different kinds of hearing loss.
- Hearing loss and tinnitus caused by excessive noise.
- Practical effects of noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus.
- How to prevent and treat noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus at work, and for children.
- Noise at Work Regulations.
- Compensation for noise exposure at work.
- Noise exposure outside work – socioacusis.
- Children's hearing.
- Equipment to protect your hearing.

At the end of this factsheet we give you details of organisations you can contact for further information.

If you would like this factsheet on audio tape, in braille or in large print, fill in the *Want to know more?* form at the end of this factsheet and send it to RNID.

How we hear

Your ears have three sections: the outer ear, the middle ear and the inner ear.

The outer ear consists of the pinna, which is the part you can see on the side of your head, and the external auditory canal, which is the passage that sound travels along. The eardrum – the tympanic membrane – covers the other end of the canal. When sound reaches the eardrum from the outside, it vibrates. Beyond the eardrum is the middle ear.

The middle ear is a space or cavity, filled with air. A chain of three tiny bones stretches right across the middle ear cavity to conduct sound from the eardrum to the oval window. These three bones, the ossicles, are called the malleus, the incus and the stapes. The malleus is attached to the inner side of the eardrum, the incus stretches between the malleus and the stapes, and the base of the stapes fits into the oval window. When sound enters your ears and makes the eardrum vibrate, the vibrations pass from the eardrum along the ossicles. The stapes pushes like a little piston against the membrane in the oval window. Behind the oval window is the inner ear.

In the inner ear, the cochlea is the hearing part of the ear. The cochlea is a fluid-filled spiral tube. The vibrations caused by sound pass from the stapes through the oval window and into the fluid of the cochlea. The cochlea is also lined with thousands of tiny hair cells. When sound waves enter the fluid of the cochlea, they move the tiny hairs, causing the hair cells to send electrical messages to the auditory nerve. Different

frequencies of sound are picked up by different hair cells, depending where in the spiral tube they are located. The nerve passes impulses up to your brain, which recognises them as different sounds – for example, people talking, or footsteps.

For more information about how we hear, see our leaflet *Ears and ear problems*.

Different kinds of hearing loss

Hearing loss ranges from mild to profound – total – deafness. Hearing loss can be measured by hearing tests. Various terms are used to describe deafness depending on the pattern of hearing loss – for example, ‘high frequency’ – hearing is poorest for high pitch sounds – ‘low frequency’ – hearing is poorest for low pitch sounds – or ‘flat’ – a similar hearing loss across all normally heard frequencies. It may have various causes, many of which produce a characteristic type and degree of loss.

Hearing losses are classed as **conductive** or **sensorineural**, depending on which part of the ear is not working properly. Some people have a mixed hearing loss – conductive *and* sensorineural.

Conductive hearing loss

A conductive hearing loss is caused by a mechanical obstruction to the transmission of sound in the outer or middle ear. For example, sound will not be transmitted efficiently if the ear drum or middle ear bones are damaged.

Sensorineural hearing loss

Sensorineural hearing loss is caused by damage to hair cells in the cochlea within the inner ear. These cells cannot be repaired or replaced. Damage of this kind may happen if you have an infection, or if you take particular drugs. It is also an effect of growing old. In addition, the cochlea can be permanently damaged by exposure to loud noises. It is important to be aware of the dangers and know how to minimise risk to your hearing.

One effect of sensorineural hearing loss is *recruitment* – where you find it difficult to hear quiet sounds but hear loud ones uncomfortably well. If you have recruitment and need a hearing aid, you may need one that will stop loud sounds becoming uncomfortable. For more information, see our factsheet *Loudness recruitment and hyperacusis*.

Hearing loss caused by excessive noise

Exposure to excessive noise can cause hearing loss which is temporary – **temporary threshold shift** – or permanent – **permanent threshold shift**.

Temporary threshold shift

You are likely to notice this as a temporary dullness in your hearing after you have been exposed to loud noise. Your hearing will recover, normally after about two days, but this can vary depending on factors such as the loudness of the noise, and how long you were exposed to it.

Permanent threshold shift

If your hearing does not recover completely after about 48 hours, the remaining loss is considered to be permanent. Noise can cause permanent hearing loss in two ways:

Noise-induced hearing loss.

- Acoustic trauma.

Noise-induced hearing loss

This happens when you have been regularly exposed to dangerous levels of noise over a long period of time. You gradually get a sensorineural hearing loss which is usually most severe in the high frequencies, or pitches – at around 3 to 4 kHz. The hearing loss will be similar in each ear and will get worse if you continue to be exposed to the noise.

Acoustic trauma

This happens when you are exposed to a very high sound level for a short period of time – for example, if you are close to an explosion, or gunfire. This type of sound can cause a sudden hearing loss that is often more severe in the ear closest to the sound. You will usually have a sensorineural hearing loss. In some cases, a very intense sound can perforate your eardrum.

Tinnitus caused by excessive noise

Exposure to loud noise is one of the commonest causes of tinnitus. Excessive (too much) noise can mean that the permanent damage caused to your hearing system may result in tinnitus, sometimes years after you were exposed to the period of noise.

Sometimes, tinnitus is the first sign that your ear has been damaged by noise. You may get tinnitus before there is any noticeable effect on your hearing. The tinnitus can occur suddenly or very gradually. For some people, it can be temporary.

What are the practical effects of noise-induced hearing loss?

The chart that shows your hearing levels when you have a hearing test is known as an audiogram. If your hearing loss is caused by noise exposure, tests will normally show your hearing loss to have a characteristic pattern. The typical pattern usually consists of a 'dip' in your hearing in the high frequencies (at around 3-4 kHz). If the noise exposure continues, this dip in your audiogram will spread and affect lower and higher frequencies too.

You may not notice your hearing loss, particularly to begin with. As it gets worse and affects a wider frequency range, you find it difficult follow conversations if there is background noise. The hearing loss may continue to increase for some time after you have stopped being exposed to the noise.

With acoustic trauma, you may notice you have difficulty hearing with one ear. When you are talking to people, you will have little (if any) problem, because the 'good' ear can hear normally. If you are listening with the affected ear, sound is distorted and speech seems muffled.

Most people find their hearing gets worse as they get older. This is a condition called age-related hearing loss or *presbycusis*. If you have a noise-induced hearing loss and you develop presbycusis too, the combination may mean that your hearing loss is worse than it would

have been just from getting older, and that it has a much greater effect on your life.

How can I prevent or treat noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus?

It is almost always worth trying a hearing aid if you have a hearing loss that affects your quality of life. It could improve your hearing in particular situations, make conversations easier, and reduce your awareness of any tinnitus. However, hearing aids cannot restore your hearing to normal. Once your cochlea has been damaged permanently, there is no treatment or surgery that can reverse it, so it is important to prevent your hearing being damaged by noise in the first place.

Contact the RNID Tinnitus Helpline for information about how to prevent and treat noise-induced tinnitus.

How can I protect my children's hearing?

Children's heads and ear canals are still developing and their ears are more likely to be damaged by high frequency sounds than those of adults. You should prevent your children from playing with toys that make a loud sound close to their ears.

How can I prevent noise-induced hearing loss at work?

If you can reduce the time you are exposed to noise, and the level of noise you are exposed to, you will help prevent damage to your hearing. The following methods can be used by employers to reduce noise exposure in the workplace:

- **Reducing noise produced by machinery, or other equipment.**

When employers are buying new machinery, they should ask about noise levels – the amount of noise the machinery makes could

influence their decision on what to buy. They may also decide to enclose machinery to contain the noise it makes, or if possible, put it in a separate room. It may be possible to fit silencers to some equipment.

- **Reorganising work patterns.** This could be to reduce the number of employees exposed to noise, and making the periods when they are exposed to noise shorter.
- **Introducing ear protectors.** See *Equipment to protect your hearing* later.
- **Education.** This could include educating both you and your employer about the dangers of exposure to excessive noise.

What are the Noise at Work Regulations?

The Noise at Work Regulations 1989 set action levels – levels of daily personal noise exposure – at which employers must take action to protect employees' hearing. The regulations say that if you are exposed to loud noise at work, your employer must have noise levels assessed, and keep a record of the assessment.

You will know that an assessment is needed at work if you have to shout to talk to someone who is about two metres away from you. You may also be concerned if your work involves listening to loud sounds through headphones or earpieces for much of the time.

What are my employer's responsibilities?

Noise at or above 85 dB(A)

If daily noise levels reach or exceed 85 dB(A), your employer must tell you about the risks, and explain how you can protect your ears. Your employer must also provide ear protectors for you to use and your employer must keep them in good repair.

Noise at or above 90 dB(A)

If you work somewhere with daily noise levels at or above 90 dB(A), or if sound levels ever peak at or above 140 dB(A), the law says you *must* wear ear protectors, and it is up to your employer to make sure you do. If your employer doesn't do this, they can be taken to court. Your employer must also keep the ear protectors in good repair and clearly mark Ear Protection Zones – areas where you must wear them. If you do more than one noisy job, this may mean you are exposed to loud noise for longer, which increases the risk of hearing loss.

Hearing tests

If you are exposed to high noise levels at work, your employer must arrange for you to have your hearing tested regularly by experts. Your employer must keep records of the test results, make sure you are told about your own results and what they mean, and ensure that you get medical advice if you have a hearing loss.

Your employer must take action to reduce noise exposure – for example, by organising a programme of noise control measures. More details of the regulations can be obtained by contacting the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). See *Further information* for HSE's contact details.

What about noise exposure outside work?

Socioacsis is the term for hearing loss caused by exposure to loud noise outside work, such as shooting, motorcycle riding, power tools, fireworks, and loud music. The louder the noise is, and the longer you are exposed to it, the higher the risk to your hearing. The only way to

protect your hearing is to reduce the noise volume, reduce the time you are exposed to it and/or use earplugs or earmuffs (see *Equipment to protect your hearing* later in this factsheet).

Can I get compensation for noise exposure?

Making a personal injury claim

If you feel that your current or previous employer's failure to take enough steps to protect you in the workplace was the cause, or part of the cause of damage to your hearing, then you can try to get compensation from your employer. If your hearing is damaged outside work, you may be able to get compensation from the party that caused the injury. Compensation is not a social security benefit, but a civil or common-law claim. To get this, you will need to bring a successful claim for personal injury through the Civil Courts.

You are strongly advised to seek legal advice if you want to take out a personal injury claim. For more information, see our factsheet *Making a personal injury claim or medical negligence claim if you have tinnitus*.

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit

- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit compensates people who have become disabled as a result of an industrial disease or accident at work.
- It is non-contributory, which means that it doesn't matter how much National Insurance you have paid.
- The benefit is not means-tested, which means that you can claim for it regardless of any income or savings you have.
- You can claim it even if you are still working.

For more information, see RNID's factsheet Industrial injuries benefits – information for deaf and hard of hearing people.

War pensions

The war pensions scheme gives money to ex-service personnel for any disablement caused by service. For more information, see our factsheet *War pensions- information for deaf and hard of hearing people*.

What kind of equipment can protect my hearing?

Earplugs, earmuffs and canal caps can protect your ears from loud noise by reducing the level of sound reaching your ears. If you are exposed to noise that can't be stopped, reduced, or avoided, you should use earplugs or earmuffs.

Noise attenuation

Attenuation is the term used to describe the degree by which ear protectors – earplugs and earmuffs – reduce sound. Ear protectors must provide enough attenuation if they are to protect your hearing. The level of attenuation that protectors provide for different frequencies is shown on their packaging. The levels are rated in decibels, which are abbreviated as db(A). Most ear protectors give greater protection at higher frequencies (4 to 8 kHz) than at lower, and it is these higher frequency sounds that are potentially more damaging. However, it is a good idea to remember that in real situations, the attenuation is probably less than that measured by the manufacturers, as they can test, in ideal circumstances, brand new protectors that fit well.

Attenuation can also be expressed as a single Simplified Noise-Level Reduction (SNR) figure. Most industry-standard earplugs carry an SNR of between 25 and 32 dB.

Comfort and protection

Earplugs are probably best for long term use, but if noise levels are high you will need to wear earmuffs. Earplugs are also more comfortable in warm workplaces. Earmuffs and canal caps are easier to put on and take off, so are more convenient if you are exposed to noise now and again. For very high noise levels, ear earmuffs and earplugs can be worn together. This usually provides an extra 10 to 15 dB protection than if either is used alone.

Earplugs

To make sure earplugs give you enough protection against noise, check their attenuation rating. This is usually an SNR figure of between 20 and 32 dB. Many earplugs sold by chemists and sports shops are designed for swimming or to reduce minor background noise, and do not protect effectively against damaging levels of noise.

Disposable earplugs

Disposable earplugs should be soft, and fit comfortably in your ear. They are usually made of foam, mineral wadding, or soft silicone. Most disposable earplugs need to be rolled between your fingers, inserted into the ear and held in place until they expand to fill and seal the ear canal.

Ordinary cotton wool is a very bad noise protector, and not recommended.

Reusable earplugs

Reusable earplugs are made from foam, soft plastic, or rubber. They can be washed and used again. Pre-moulded, re-usable earplugs are very hardwearing, and do not need to be rolled to fit in your ear.

Canal caps

Canal caps are attached to a head or chin band, which can be carried round your neck and clamped onto your ears when you need them.

Canal caps are useful for noise that comes and goes.

Earplugs for the catering industry

If you work in the catering industry, you can get earplugs which can be detected using a metal detector if they fall into food.

Custom-made earplugs

Earplugs can also be custom-made, to give a better fit in your ear canal. They need special fitting, using a mould of your ear canal, so they tend to be expensive. However, with the better fit they should attenuate noise more effectively and be more comfortable. They may last for several years and so may be cheaper than disposable earplugs for regular, long-term use.

Musicians' earplugs

Some custom-made earplugs are specially designed to reduce the 'distortion' of sound caused by ordinary earplugs. Ordinary earplugs provide greater attenuation for higher frequency sounds, making sounds appear muffled. Musicians' earplugs are designed to give similar attenuation for sounds of all frequencies. This means that the earplugs protect from the damaging effects of loud sounds, yet allow the overall sounds to be heard clearly.

For more information about music and noise levels, contact the Musicians' Union or the British Performing Arts Medicine Trust. Contact details are in *Further information*.

Shooters' earplugs

You can also get earplugs that protect from sudden loud noises such as gunshots. These earplugs allow normal hearing at non-harmful levels, but attenuate all high-intensity sounds to a safe level. Some are electronic, while others contain special types of materials or special filters.

Earmuffs

Earmuffs, or ear defenders, look like large headphones. Hard cups fit over your ear and are sealed to your head with soft cushions on their rims. Standard models provide a similar degree of protection as standard earplugs, Earmuffs allow you to hear non-harmful sounds, but attenuate loud sounds, but you can get earmuffs for a range of levels of attenuation. Some earmuffs also provide similar attenuation at all frequencies, allowing you to hear speech and alarms more clearly.

Other earmuffs include those with folding headbands, which can be carried around or stored more easily, earmuffs with neckbands, which can be worn with face shields or helmets, and earmuffs which attach to a helmet, rather than a headband. Some earmuffs are only activated when noise is present. These earmuffs are usually electronic and act in a similar way to shooters' earplugs. Earmuffs are also available with built-in radios for communication, FM radios or audio input so that you can hear vital communications.

Where can I buy earplugs and earmuffs?

You can buy some earplugs from sports shops and chemists. However, these are often only suitable for light domestic use, and will not provide proper protection against damaging levels of noise. For this you need industrial-use earplugs and earmuffs, which are sold by DIY stores and

by shops listed under *Gunsmiths, Safety Equipment, and Industrial Protective Clothing* in the Yellow Pages.

Information in this factsheet was compiled from details provided by manufacturers and suppliers. Inclusion of a product in this factsheet does not imply a recommendation by RNID, or suggest it is suitable for you. Do carry out your own enquiries before buying any of the items in this factsheet. For more information, please contact the supplier or manufacturer of the equipment you are interested in.

Suppliers

3M United Kingdom plc

Contact 3M for information about their range of hearing protection products.

3M United Kingdom plc, 3M Centre, Cain Road, Bracknell RG12 8HT.

Tel: 01344 858000. Fax: 01344 858 278.

Website: www.mmm.com

Advanced Communication Solutions

Contact Advanced Communication Solutions for information about *Elacin Earpros* musicians' earplugs.

Advanced Communication Solutions, 129 Southdown Road, Harpenden AL5 1PU.

Tel: 01582 767 007. Fax: 01582 769 733.

E-mail: info@hearingprotection.co.uk

Website: www.hearingprotection.co.uk

Aearo Ltd

Aearo make *Classic* reusable earplugs, *Ear Ultratech* musicians' earplugs and different kinds of earmuffs.

Aearo Ltd, First Avenue, Poynton, Stockport SK12 1FJ.

Tel: 01625 878 320. Fax: 01625 877 4348.

Anti-Noise Ltd

Get in touch with Anti-Noise Ltd for details of their *Anti-Wet/Anti-Noise Earplugs*.

Anti-Noise Ltd, 67 Great Underbank, Stockport SK1 1PE.

Tel: 0161 480 8454. Fax: 0161 429 9049.

Audi-Lab

Audi-Lab makes the *Sportsmaster* customised electronic hearing protector which can cut out sounds like gunshot.

Audi-Lab, 1 Asgarth Park, Howth, County Dublin, EIRE.

Tel: 353 1 8322 075. Fax: 353 1 832 0897.

E-mail: sales@audi-lab.com Website: www.audi-lab.com

Bacou-Dalloz Ltd

Bacou-Dalloz produces the *Bilsom* and *Howard Leight* range of hearing protection products.

Bacou-Dalloz Ltd, Osborn Way, Hook RG27 9HX.

Tel: 01256 693 200. Fax: 01256 693 300.

E-mail: uksales@bacou-dalloz.com Website: www.bacou-dalloz.com

BR Distribution

BR Distribution can give you more information about *Doc's Proplugs*.

BR Distribution, 11D Tanfield Lea Industrial Estate North, Stanley, County Durham DH9 9UU.

Tel: 01207 282 806. Fax: 01207 282 007.

E-mail: br.distribution@virgin.net

Chapman & Smith

Chapman & Smith make the *Safir* range of hearing protection products.

Safir Works, East Hoathly, Lewes BN8 6EW.

Tel: 01825 840 323. Fax: 01825 840 827.

E-mail: sales@chapman-smith.co.uk

Website: www.chapman-smith.co.uk

Green Leopard Ltd

Green Leopard makes custom-made earplugs.

Green Leopard Ltd, 215 Wood Street, Kettering NN16 9SD.

Tel: 01536 500 665. Fax: 01536 503 487.

E-mail: info@greenleopard.co.uk Website: www.greenleopard.co.uk

Guymark UK Ltd

Guymark makes *Sound Censors* earplugs.

Guymark UK Ltd, St Luke's House, Upper High Street, Cradley Heath B64 5HX.

Tel: 01384 410 848. Fax: 01384 410 898.

E-mail: sales@guymark.com Website: www.guymark.com

JSP Ltd

JSP has a range of earmuffs and earplugs.

JSP Ltd, Worsham Mill, Minster Lovell, Oxfordshire OX8 5RX.

Tel: 01993 824 000. Fax: 01223 824 422.

E-mail: uksales@jsp.co.uk Website: www.jsp.co.uk

Puretone Ltd

Puretone makes a range of musicians' and shooters' earplugs.

Puretone Ltd, 9-10 Henley Business Park, Trident Close, Medway City Estate, Rochester ME2 4FR.

Tel: 01634 719 427. Fax: 01634 719 450.

E-mail: info@puretone.net Website: www.puretone.net

Scott International Ltd

Get in touch with Scott International for information about its *Protector* hearing protection range.

Scott International Ltd, Pimbo Road, West Pimbo, Skelmersdale
WN8 9RA.

Tel: 01695 727 171. Fax: 01695 711 775.

Website: www.scottint.com

Further information

British Performing Arts Medicine Trust (BPAMT)

Contact BPAMT if you would like more information about the occupational risks to hearing for musicians.

BPAMT, 196 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8JF.

Tel: 0845 602 0235. Fax: 020 7240 3335.

E-mail: bpamt@dial.pipex.com Website: www.bpamt.co.uk

Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive can provide details of noise regulations.

Health and Safety Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park,
Caerphilly CF83 3GG.

Tel: 08701 545 500. Textphone: 02920 808 537.

(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm.) Fax: 02920 859 260.

E-mail: hseinformationsservices@natbrit.com Website: www.hse.gov.uk

Musicians' Union

Contact the Musicians' Union for information about health and safety for musicians.

The Musicians' Union, 60/62 Clapham Road, London SW9 0JJ.

Tel: 0207 582 5566. Fax: 0207 582 9805.

Website: www.musiciansunion.org.uk

Further information from RNID

If you want to find out more about some of the subjects covered in this factsheet you may want to look at our leaflets *Ears and ear problems* and *Look after your ears*.

The RNID Information Line offers a wide range of information on many aspects of deafness and hearing loss. You can contact us for further copies of this factsheet and the full range of our information factsheets and leaflets. We also publish a range of publications about noise in the workplace which you can order from the RNID Information Line.

RNID Information Line

RNID Information Line, 19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL.

Tel: 0808 808 0123. Textphone: 0808 808 9000. Fax: 020 7296 8199.

E-mail: informationline@rnid.org.uk Website: www.rnid.org.uk

RNID Tinnitus Helpline

RNID Tinnitus Helpline, 19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL.

Tel: 0808 808 6666. Textphone: 0808 808 0007. Fax: 020 7296 8199.

E-mail: tinnitushelpline@rnid.org.uk Website: www.rnid.org.uk

Alternatively, fill in the *Want to know more?* order form at the end of this factsheet and return it to RNID.

Copyright

This factsheet may be photocopied for information or educational purposes only. It may not be photocopied in part. It may *not* be photocopied or reproduced if your intention is to sell the factsheets. Factsheets are updated regularly. Any out-of-date editions should be destroyed. You can get the most recent edition from RNID. If you wish to photocopy this factsheet, please contact the RNID Information Line (see above for details) or go to our website at www.rnid.org.uk to check that you have the most recent edition. If you are a commercial organisation and you need multiple copies of this factsheet, please contact the RNID Information Line to find out how to get the quantity you need.

RNID Information, March 2003

Want to know more?

This factsheet is available in **audio tape**, **braille** and **large print**. We can also send you more information on many of the subjects covered in this factsheet. Just tick the boxes below, tell us what you particularly need to know about, or see our website at **www.rnid.org.uk**

Please send me:

Noise exposure audio tape braille large print

The RNID *Publications Catalogue*.

Information about RNID Typetalk and BT TextDirect.

Details of RNID communication services in my area.

RNID's fundraising leaflet. RNID relies heavily on donations from, individuals, companies, trusts and fundraising events. Our leaflet shows how *you* can help.

Details on supporting RNID's future work with a legacy.

Information on how to take part in RNID campaigns.

A copy of the RNID Sound Advantage *Solutions* catalogue, giving details of equipment for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Other information – please tell us what you would like to know.

We are always keen to know what our customers think about our publications. If you have any suggestions for ways we could improve this factsheet you can use the space below. Please send your suggestions to the address overleaf.

Please send this information to: (Please write clearly using block capitals)

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss) First Name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ **E-mail** _____

Telephone _____ **Textphone** _____

Your contact details will be held on our database so that occasionally we can send you information on our work. Please tick this box if you do not wish your details to be kept on the database.

We will use any information you give below to monitor requests for this factsheet and help us tailor our services to your needs. You do not have to give this information, but if you do, please tick this box to confirm we may keep it on our database.

Tick all boxes that apply

Is the information:

- For you
- For a friend or family member
- A professional enquiry

Are you?

- At school or below school age
- A student
- Working age
- Retired

How would you describe yourself?

- Profoundly/severely deaf
- Hard of hearing
- Hearing
- Hearing aid user
- I have tinnitus
- I have balance problems

If we could provide it, would you like to receive information in a different format? Please use number 1, 2 or 3 to show your preferred choice.

- Videotape in British Sign Language (BSL) and with subtitles
- E-mail
- Face-to-face

If we could provide it, would you like information in another language?

- Yes. Please tell us which one.

Please return this form to: RNID Information Line, 19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL or order from our website at www.rnid.org.uk