Q. What Should I Do About My Hearing Loss?
A. • It is never too late to protect your hearing even if you already have hearing loss. You want to protect what hearing you still have by using protection when you are exposed to excessive noise.

• If you continue to be exposed to excessive noise, you should protect your hearing with hearing protection devices.

• If your noise levels are above 85 decibels, your employer is required to provide a hearing conservation program.

• Your hearing loss can be from:

  A. A one-time exposure to loud noise.
  B. An ongoing exposure to loud noise.
  C. Repeated or long exposure to loud noise.

Q. What Sounds Cause Hearing Loss?
A. • The loudness of sound is measured in units called decibels. Hearing loss occurs with exposures of 85 decibels or greater.

• Employers are required to provide hearing conservation programs when noise levels are above 85 decibels.

• Hearing conservation programs consist of measuring noise levels, training people about noise levels, providing hearing protection devices, and periodically testing hearing levels.

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Q. What Causes Hearing Loss?
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  C. Repeated or long exposure to loud noise.
It is important to note the amount of protection listed on the hearing protector package is under ideal situations and is not achievable with normal use in your home or your workplace. Therefore, the main consideration is to find a hearing protector that is comfortable to wear and convenient to use. It may take some trial and error to find a protector that meets your needs. There are over 200 styles available. So, find a protector you like and wear it every time you are in hazardous noise.

Monitor your hearing loss with an annual hearing test.

Ask your health care provider if a hearing aid or other treatment would help your hearing.

Michigan State University has been asked by the Michigan OSHA (MIOSHA) program to keep track of how many people in Michigan are getting hearing loss from noise at work. This information is used by the MIOSHA program as part of their strategic plan to reduce excessive noise levels and prevent hearing loss among Michigan workers.