



The Telecoil - How a Small Coil Enhances Your Hearing Aid

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Many people aren't aware that their hearing aids may have telecoils (t-coils) that can have a positive effect on hearing in noisy environments! Here is some great news about how and where this can benefit those who wear hearing aids or cochlear implants.

What is a telecoil and what can it do?

A telecoil is a small coil of wire around a core that can produce a magnetic current from a nearby magnetic field. What that really means is that if your hearing aid has an activated t-coil, you can turn the switch on your hearing aid or cochlear implant and be able to "hone in" on a sound source and eliminate background noise. These are available on most hearing aids and all cochlear implants.

In some situations you would need have an assistive listening device (ALD), such as an FM system. If you are in a noisy restaurant, for example, the person you are having dinner with can wear a transmitter and you can wear a neck loop. With the t-coil setting, you will be able to hear your dinner companion clearly, without the background noise. Sounds from a radio, computer, or MP3 player will go directly to your hearing aid or cochlear implant without the use of head phones! In other situations, an extra device isn't necessary. All landline phones and most cell phones are t-coil compatible, and all that you need to do is activate the t-coil switch and hearing will be greatly improved. Also, any venue that is has a "loop system" will also enhance your hearing by activating the t-coil.

What is a loop system?

A loop system, hearing loop or induction loop is simply a wire that circles a room and is connected to a sound system. The speaker is then clearly heard by any hearing aid or cochlear implant wearer with their t-coil switch activated. More and more public places are being "looped" for their hard of hearing clientele, including many churches, auditoriums, live theaters, airports, train stations, courts, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc. Look for a sign like the one shown here to know whether or not the venue is looped.



Europe is well versed with telecoil technology and has progressed further than here in the states, but knowledge about this technology can help businesses become more accessible for hearing aid users! For more information on hearing loops, go to www.hearingloop.org or www.loopnm.com.

Information about telecoils from your audiologist or hearing aid provider.

If you are not sure you have a telecoil in your hearing aid, call for a follow up visit. You are entitled to know if you have this technology at your fingertips, and if you do have a telecoil in your hearing aid, it can make a world of difference in your hearing!