



Sounds of Summer

There are countless reasons to love summer. The warm, sunny weather is reenergizing and lends itself to leisure, celebration, and outdoor projects. With this increase in outdoor activities, come potential hazards to one of our most important senses.

Divine Savior Healthcare Audiologist Tami Leslie shares, “In the summer, our ears are exposed to many sounds and activities associated with the season and often we forget to protect them. And our ears can be exposed to these noises countless times over the course of the summer. Just think of how often you mow your lawn or go swimming.”

Lawn mowers, shop tools like drills and power saws, outdoor concerts, recreational vehicles such as motorcycles and race cars, and firecrackers all register above 90 decibels. Ear plugs are recommended for prolonged exposure to any sounds registering over 85 decibels.

Tami suggests, “If you know you’ll be around loud sounds this summer, consider packing ear plugs as a precaution - like you would sunscreen or bug spray”. Disposable foam earplugs are available at local pharmacies, big box stores, or online. Often, you can purchase 50 individually wrapped pairs for under ten dollars and have them to stash in a travel bag, the car, or the garage.

“If you’re in a very noisy environment and your ears are unprotected, consider taking a break from the noise or walking farther away from the noise to protect your hearing,” Tami offers. For example, leave the firework shows to the pros and choose a viewing spot where you can see the sounds and colors but are not too close to the noise.

“Swimmer’s ear is another common problem we see associated with summertime. We see it in children and adults, and it can be quite painful,” states Tami. Swimmer’s ear is an infection of the outer ear canal caused by moisture trapped in the ear canal or injury to the canal. To avoid swimmer’s ear Tami suggests drying your ears well with a towel after swimming or bathing to prevent an infection.

If you are chronically exposed to loud noise or the water, custom hearing and swimming plugs are available and can be fitted to your individual ear by professionals at Divine Savior Healthcare.

Lastly, summer is a great opportunity for spending time outdoors. “In the Audiology department at Divine Savior, we really encourage you to urge your children, especially if they are quite young, to spend a lot of time outside and limit screen time. This is a great way for you to bond with your children. It often helps them sleep better, and the real interactions help strengthen their speech and language

development,” shares Tami. “Just make sure their ears are protected from loud noises and dried out after swimming”.

If you are having trouble hearing or are looking for a licensed audiologist, Divine Savior Healthcare is here to help. To make an appointment with Tami or another one of our expert providers, please call (608) 745- 5956. Summer can’t be fully enjoyed if it can’t be fully heard.