



Edition 11 – Summer 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Feature: Hitting the Road with Hearing Loss
- Angela's Recipe of the Month: Roast Pumpkin Salmon with Feta & Spinach Salad

Joke of the Month



Victorian Hearing specialize in invisible hearing solutions. We are proud to be one of the few qualified providers in Australia to offer the extended wear Lyric. Lyric is worn 24/7 for months at a time. It is invisible, convenient and hassle free.

Two of our Audiologists, Gyneth and Liz, have just completed their Lyric training. Victorian Hearing can now offer Lyric fittings at our CBD, Clayton, Glen Waverley, Hampton and Malvern clinics, by any one of 4 Audiologists.

We also welcome another Liz, to our admin team. Liz has wealth of audiological knowledge and works at reception at our Clayton and Cabrini sites.

From all the staff at Victorian Hearing, we wish all our valued clients a safe and happy Christmas and New Year! Our rooms will be closed on 24th December 2015 and re-open on Monday 4th January, 2016. So please ensure you have enough hearing aid batteries and filters for this time. Thank-you for referring your family and friends to us this year. See you all in 2016!

As always, we hope this newsletter is of interest to you and we would welcome your input into future editions, or requests for particular topics of interest. Just email us on info@victorianhearing.com.au.

Quote of the Month

"The art of conversation is the art of hearing as well as of being heard".

William Hazlitt "Selected Essays" 1778-1830



Feature Article: Hitting the Road with Hearing Loss

Contributed by Lisa Packer, staff writer for Healthy Hearing | Friday July 17th, 2015

Thinking about traveling by car this summer? Don't let your hearing loss hold you back.

Studies have shown that driving with hearing loss is not necessarily less safe than driving with normal hearing. In the 1920s, though, several states briefly banned those who were deaf or had hearing loss from getting drivers licenses! A nationwide ban was considered, but fortunately evidence was presented that showed the ban to be not only unnecessary, but discriminatory as well.

A new study shows drivers with hearing loss are actually more attentive and often, safer drivers than drivers who have full hearing.

These days, we know that driving relies on a combination of focus, speed and experience. Notice anything? None of these have anything to do with hearing.

Are you at risk?

As a matter of fact, a recent study done in Sweden shows drivers with hearing loss pose no greater risk than other drivers, and in fact might be better drivers.

In the study, researchers used a questionnaire, a driving simulator and an observational study in real traffic to compare drivers with hearing loss to those without hearing loss. They found the drivers with hearing loss were, in fact, more cautious and observant. The simulator study showed, among other things, the drivers with hearing loss reduced their speed more than those with normal hearing in difficult traffic or when the driving circumstances became challenging. The study also showed drivers with hearing loss looked in their rear view and side view mirrors and glanced to the side more often than drivers with normal hearing.

One reason for this increased safety in driving might be that deaf drivers or those with hearing loss learn to pay closer attention to visual cues. In a phenomenon known as neural plasticity, the parts of the brain normally devoted to hearing become rewired to accommodate other senses, allowing those senses take over. For example, those who were born deaf have been proven to have better peripheral vision and to process motion; both of these are important for safe driving.

That is not to say that drivers with hearing loss do not have to be more careful, however. Other studies have shown that older adults with hearing loss have more difficulty driving in the presence of distractions, creating more risk. Excessive conversation, loud music or use of cell phones are an everyday reality for most drivers, even those with average hearing, so it stands to reason that drivers with hearing loss should keep distractions to a minimum to ensure safety on the road.

With proper precautions, however, drivers with hearing loss have no reason to fear driving. However they should consider using devices specially designed for those drivers with hearing loss, such as:

- Alert system that use lights to signal sirens or honking: A multi-light panel that can tell different sounds apart and alerts the driver to the particular situation approaching
- Extra wide rear view mirror
- Panoramic mirrors to get a wider view of the surrounding environment
- Personal ALD or FM system
- Loop system
- Lapel microphone clipped to passenger's seat belt for clearer communication



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Experts recommend these tips for safer driving with hearing loss:

- Keep up with car maintenance to keep your car in top condition. Any out of the ordinary noises are a signal that something may be wrong with your car, so if you can't hear them you are at a disadvantage.
- Keep the music volume low while driving.
- Make sure your rear view and side view mirrors are adjusted properly.
- Keep the windows closed and use the air conditioning instead, if possible.
- Make sure to check the turn signal indicator light on your dashboard to make sure your turn signal hasn't been left on.
- Reduce distractions. Any other activities you try to do while driving, like eating or applying lipstick, take your focus off of the road where it belongs.
- Wear your hearing aid every time you drive.
- Watch for flashing reflections in any reflective surface (building windows, for example) to know where a siren is coming from.
- Remember emergency vehicles often come in multiples. After one passes, there is likely to be at least one more, so stay alert until you're sure they have all passed.
- Be alert at railroad crossings. Look for flashing lights, and look left and right for approaching trains.
- Ask passengers to wait to speak to you until you are stopped or at a traffic light, or keep the conversation to a minimum to reduce distraction.
- Before you drive, ask yourself if you are comfortable doing so. If you are not comfortable, use public transportation or let someone else take the wheel. Drivers who are feeling nervous or stressed tend to make more mistakes.

With proper precautions, those with hearing loss can still enjoy hitting the open highway this summer and seeing where the road takes them. Above all, be alert to any changes in your hearing, and be sure to see a hearing healthcare professional for an evaluation if you feel your hearing might have changed.

Angela's Recipe of the Month: *Roast Pumpkin Salmon with Feta & Spinach Salad*

Ingredients:

- 2x 150g Salmon portions, skin-off
- 400g pumpkin, peeled
- 4 garlic cloves, left whole with skin on
- 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ lemons, juiced
- 200g baby spinach leaves or rocket
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 25g slivered almonds
- 100g feta, crumbled
- 100g cous cous, cooked
- Bunch of asparagus, blanched & refreshed

Method:

Step 1: Pre-heat oven to 200°C. Cut salmon and pumpkin into 3cm cubes.

Step 2: Place pumpkin and garlic on an oven tray, and season with salt and olive oil. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown

Step 3: Remove and allow to cool. Mix lemon and oil together and then add the salmon. Cook salmon in a pan on medium heat and then let cool

Step 4: In a bowl, combine spinach, shallot, almonds, feta, garlic, cous cous, asparagus and pumpkin. Toss salmon through salad and coat with dressing.

