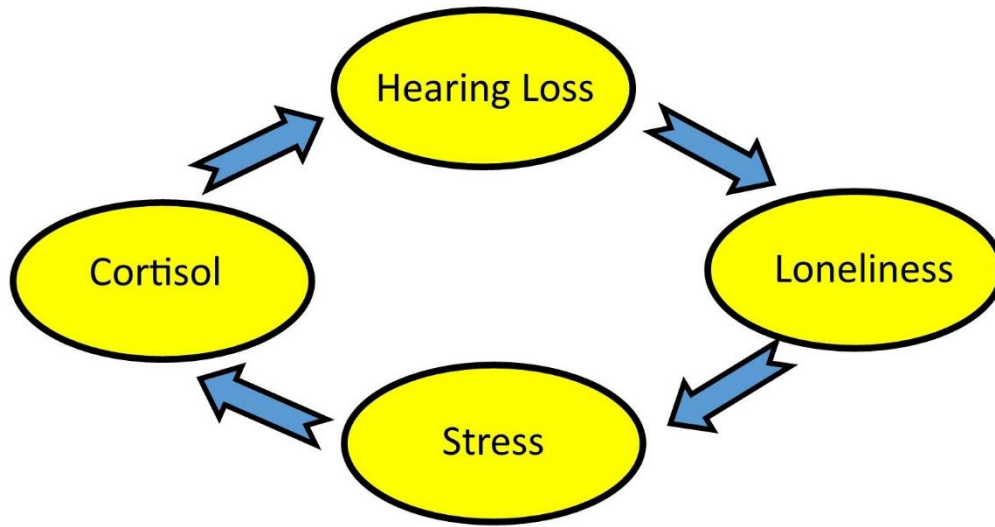


# Hearing Loss & Loneliness

Sam Johnston, NOVA Hearing



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- Hearing Loss Big Cause of Loneliness
    - Loneliness Causes Stress
    - Stress Produces Cortisol
    - Cortisol Impairs Hearing
- REPEAT
- 

- Untreated Hearing Loss Linked to Loneliness and Isolation for Seniors

When Mom could no longer hear her microwave, she assumed she needed to get it repaired. So began her frustrating journey into chronic hearing loss. Another daughter recounts her senior Mom's experience with aging and hearing loss; Mom (Grandma) could no longer hear her granddaughters. Grandma was saddened by this and the kids were inclined not to speak with Grandma because she would not be able to hear the young girls and the granddaughters did not know how to fix this. Hearing loss was a direct cause of her loneliness.

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## Signs of Hearing Loss:

- Everyone Mumbles!
  - Often need people to repeat
  - Conversations muddled, indecipherable especially in noisy venues
  - TV too loud
  - Cannot hear women and children
  - Cannot hear rustling leaves, Footsteps, Whispers...
  - Music sounds less rich...
- 

Credits:

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• Loneliness Caused by Hearing Loss **Increases Stress**

Hearing Loss makes your body stressed

a. **Stress Lowers Your Immune Systems and Increases Cortisol**

Research confirms the immune system goes into “shock” when flooded with cortisol leaving the body vulnerable. Lonely people are much more likely to be ill and find the recovery process more difficult.

b. **Loneliness Raises Your Inflammation Levels**

High levels of cortisol linked to stress increases your immune system immunosuppressant chemistry or chronic inflammation – the body’s short-term healing response to injury. Social isolation causes far higher than normal levels of immunosuppressants.

c. **Loneliness Decreases Life Expectancy**

One study suggested prolonged loneliness is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Prolonged loneliness is as seriously bad for your health as smoking, obesity and other health conditions.

d. **Loneliness May affect Your Genes**

Cutting edge research has found that prolonged loneliness can change the expression of our genes. Loneliness may be harming us at the simplest expression of our human existence..

e. **Loneliness Raises Your Blood Pressure**

Stress has been linked to higher blood pressure. The lonelier one is the more likely to have higher than normal blood pressure

f. **Loneliness Increases Your Risk for Dementia**

A senior that feels lonely may be 64% more likely to develop dementia. Reasons for loneliness may be less mobility, smaller or no social networks and family that is somewhere else and too busy.

• Stress Causes the Body to **Produce Cortisol**

Cortisol is a hormone produced by the body to help us respond to adverse situations. It’s referred to as the ‘Fight-or-Flight’ hormone which is the bodies way of shifting into ‘high gear’ to help defend ourselves or help us run away in order to survive.

The body’s use of cortisol comes with very high prices to pay. Body cells and systems are forced to perform at very high rates of metabolism. This high rate of metabolism cause cellular system damage... including hearing.

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