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## EDUCATIONAL ONLINE EVENT

Join us for our quarterly webinar series!

**Noise-Induced Hearing Loss—**  
*How Loud is Too Loud?*

**May 19, 2022**  
**11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.**



**Presented by UOP audiologist Celia Zhang,**  
Au.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor in Audiology

**Visit [www.upacifichearing.com/events](http://www.upacifichearing.com/events) for**  
registration and additional information.

## DID YOU KNOW

May Is Better Hearing &  
Speech Month?

### FAREWELL From Stephanie

Dear UOP Hearing and Balance Center Patients,

As some of you already know, I will be leaving my position at the University of the Pacific at the end of March. I have accepted a position closer to my home in Rancho Cordova.

I have been with the UOP Hearing and Balance Center for about seven years now, and some of you have been with me since the very beginning! I started here one year out of graduate school and have grown so much. I made friends for life, had two children, expanded my expertise and grew into my own as a clinician.

One of the things I value most about the Center is that we truly get to know our patients. Seeing patients regularly and sharing life updates are what I will miss most. I have greatly enjoyed spending time with each of you and always felt honored to care for your hearing needs.

Since the UOP team truly cares and puts the patient first, I know you will be in the best of hands by continuing your care here. I wish you the best and will always think back fondly on my time here.

Warmest wishes,

Stephanie Raval, Au.D.



Picture from Dr. Stephanie Raval's Farewell Party



**May is Better Hearing & Speech Month, an annual occasion designed to raise awareness of hearing loss and speech problems.**

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) created Better Hearing & Speech Month in 1927. In 1986, President Reagan issued a formal proclamation designating May as the official month to heighten public awareness around hearing loss and speech disorders.

Better Hearing & Speech Month aims to encourage people to act if they believe there might be a problem with their hearing or speech. Many in the hearing care industry take advantage of the opportunity to educate people during May. They've got a large potential audience: an estimated 48 million Americans and counting suffer from hearing loss.<sup>1</sup> Hearing and communication issues are greater than they ever have been.

Routine hearing evaluations and hearing protection are still the best ways to proactively manage your hearing health. Regular evaluations will help detect changes in your hearing early so that you can address them before they worsen, and hearing protection helps prevent additional hearing loss.

**If it's been more than a year since your last hearing evaluation, heed the message of Better Hearing & Speech Month and contact the University of the Pacific today for an appointment—(209) 946-7378.**

<sup>1</sup> Hearing Loss Association of America. (n.d.). Hearing Loss Facts and Statistics. [https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA\\_HearingLoss\\_Facts\\_Statistics.pdf?pdf=FactStats](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HLAA_HearingLoss_Facts_Statistics.pdf?pdf=FactStats)

# RECREATIONAL BACKGROUND NOISE

Hearing loss is often viewed as an inevitable sign of aging, but other factors—such as exposure to recreational background noise—are responsible for many cases.

Excessive noise exposure causes damage to the hair cells of the inner ear, leading to permanent hearing loss. The effects are cumulative and build up over time, but a sudden loud noise, such as a gunshot or explosion, can cause immediate and irreversible hearing damage.

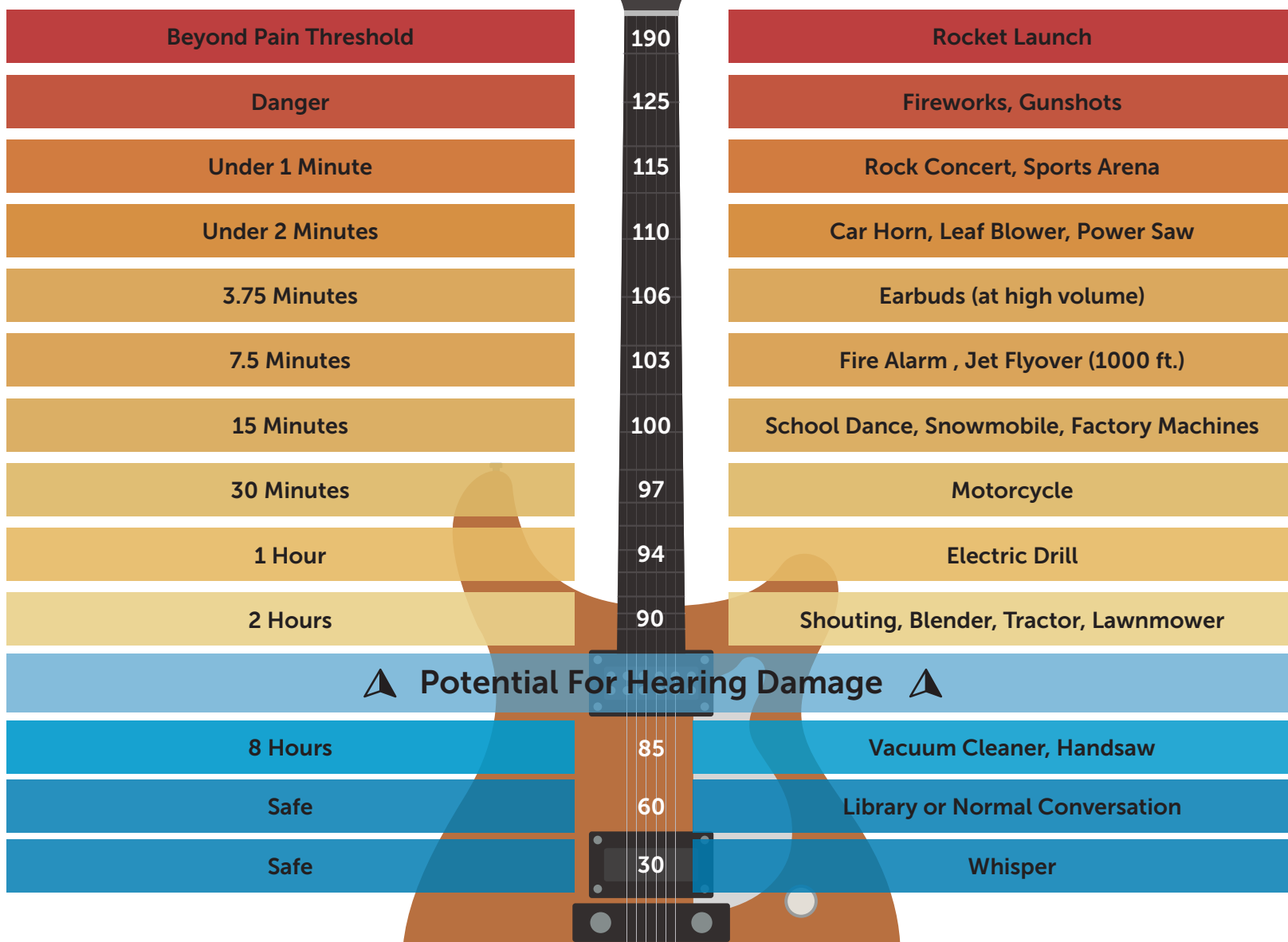
The threshold for safe hearing is 85 decibels (dB); anything exceeding this level can cause hearing damage. Recreational background noise originates from many sources, including busy roads, rock concerts, sporting events, motorcycles, boats, snowmobiles, leaf and snow blowers, fireworks and firearms use.

When you're exposed to background noise, wearing ear protection is the single most important step you can take to prevent hearing loss. Earplugs protect your ears from loud noise and prevent foreign objects, such as dust and water, from entering your ear canals. Those that are custom-molded to fit the contours of your ears offer the best protection.

Earplugs are made of different materials, including memory foam and silicone. They are rated by decibel level and may be disposable or non-disposable.

Custom earplugs have been developed for swimmers, surfers, musicians, hunters and those in law enforcement. Each has specific features designed to protect the wearer from the unique dangers associated with their recreational activity. Ask your audiologist for more information.

## HOW LONG CAN YOU LISTEN SAFELY WITH UNPROTECTED HEARING?



# NIOSH UNVEILS NEW STUDY ON HEARING PROTECTION

A recent study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) found that **53% of noise-exposed workers didn't consistently use hearing protection when exposed to hazardous occupational noise.**<sup>1</sup>

This statistic is alarming, as over 22 million U.S. workers currently face exposure to hazardous noise at work.<sup>2</sup> Younger workers aged 18–25, females and smokers were the least likely to wear hearing protection devices (HPDs).

Those who worked in industries with the least noise exposure (like finance and social assistance) were less likely to wear HPDs. However, just because exposure to hazardous noise is less common in their line of work does not mean that there are no instances where they could benefit from using hearing protection.

Surprisingly, some industries where noise is a well-recognized hazard were found to have a high prevalence of HPD non-use as well. These include agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting (74%) and construction (52%).

This is another indicator that education and training about the importance of proper and consistent use of HPDs are critical. Additionally, workers need to have access to

HPDs that are both comfortable and still allow them to communicate effectively with their coworkers and hear what they need to in order to perform their jobs safely.

If you are exposed to loud noise at work, here are steps you can take to protect your hearing:

- **Wear hearing protection**—Your audiologist can work with you to find the right earplugs to protect you from unsafe noise levels at your job.
- **Get routine hearing screenings**—Being proactive will allow you to catch and treat a hearing loss sooner.
- **Take noise breaks**—Giving your ears some time away from a loud environment helps reduce your overall noise exposure.

**Do you work, or have you worked in a noisy environment? Contact us at (209) 946-7378 to get a hearing health checkup as soon as possible.**

1. Green, D. R., Masterson, E. A., & Themann, C. L. (2021). Prevalence of hearing protection device non-use among noise-exposed US workers in 2007 and 2014. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.23291>

2. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (n.d.). Occupational Noise Exposure. <https://www.osha.gov/noise#:~:text=>

## May Is Better Hearing & Speech Month! Celebrate with Oticon MORE™.

**Oticon More** gives your brain more of the relevant information it needs to make better sense of sound, so you get better speech understanding with less effort and the ability to remember more.



**Schedule an appointment within the month of May and receive:**

- Complimentary hearing aid consultation
- 45-day risk-free trial

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT, CALL (209) 946-7378.**