

# TO YOUR HEALTH

Carleton-Willard Out-Patient Clinic

100 Old Billerica Road, Bedford MA 01730

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Happy



Spring

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## Can You Hear Me Now?

By Susan Cusson, NP



Nearly everyone has experienced trouble hearing at one time or another. Common causes include a buildup of earwax or fluid in the ear, ear infections, or the change in air pressure when taking off in an airplane. A mild degree of permanent hearing loss is an inevitable part of the aging process. Age-related hearing loss or presbycusis is generally a slow, progressive hearing loss that affects both ears equally. Hearing loss begins in the high frequencies and later affects the lower frequencies. Because of this slow progression, many adults consider it a normal sign of aging. Often times a spouse or friend notices a change long before the individual with the hearing loss even acknowledges it.

How do you know if you need a hearing test? Do you ever miss parts of the conversation at dinner parties or in noisy restaurants? Are you always turning up the volume on your TV or radio? Do you ask people to repeat themselves? Do you miss telephone calls — or have trouble hearing on the phone? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, talk with your healthcare provider about getting a hearing test. There’s no question that hearing aids are expensive but consider the hidden costs of going without. The link between hearing loss and feelings of depression, anxiety, frustration and social isolation is well known. More recently, the implications of hearing loss on our cognitive abilities has been identified in research studies. Dr. Frank Lin and his colleagues at Johns Hopkins University found a strong link

between degree of hearing loss and risk of developing dementia. Individuals with mild hearing loss were twice as likely to develop dementia as those with normal hearing, those with moderate hearing loss were three times more likely, and those with severe hearing loss had five times the risk. While this study could not definitively conclude that early treatment with hearing aids would reduce the risk of dementia, there was a positive correlation between degree of hearing loss and risk of dementia (Lin et al., 2011).

Hearing loss prevalence in the United States in patients seventy and older is over 60%. It is the third most common chronic health condition facing older adults. Unfortunately, only 20% of individuals who might benefit from treatment actually seek help. On average, hearing aid users wait over 10 years after their initial diagnosis to be fit with their first set of hearing aids. Don’t wait, get tested!

### Resources available at CWV

- Amplification devices (headphones) are available for use in the Clinic, Llewysac and Nursing Center.
- Some hearing aids have a T-coil feature that can connect directly with the sound system in the auditorium. The auditorium also has amplification devices available anyone can use.
- Audiologist Dr. Lou Femino is available for consultation in the Clinic. If you suspect you might have a hearing problem, call the Clinic for an appointment.





**New location!**



### **Bedford Vision Center**

Optician will be in the **Clinic** starting in April  
First Monday of the month (most months)  
9:30-10:30am

### **Health Education Lecture**

Jonathon O'Dell from the  
Commission for the Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing will present:

**"How to be Heard:  
Letting Staff Know How They Can  
Meet Your Needs"**

**Friday, April 29  
in the Center Auditorium  
10:30 am — 11:30 am**

**Discover your perfect "fit".**

**Sign up for a FREE  
CarFit Checkup!**

**May 6  
10am-12pm**

# **CARFit**

Helping Mature Drivers Find Their Safest Fit

**AOTA** The American  
Occupational Therapy  
Association, Inc.



**DRIVER  
SAFETY**   
Real Possibilities

CarFit is a FREE, interactive and  
educational program that teaches  
participants how to make their personal  
vehicle "fit" them to increase safety and  
mobility when they hit the road.  
This is **NOT** a driving evaluation!

**To schedule your 20 minute  
appointment please call or stop  
by the Clinic.**

**Appointment spaces are  
limited so don't wait!**

### **ACUPUNCTURE & ACUPRESSURE**

Research has shown that Acupuncture and Acupressure  
can treat low back pain effectively.

These therapies are also very good for treating:

- ◆ Anxiety and winter blues
  - ◆ Boosting immune
  - ◆ Strengthening stamina
  - ◆ Easing digestion and more

Barbara Blanchard sees Residents on

Monday afternoons for 30 or 60 minute treatments.

Acupuncture and/or Acupressure.

Call the Clinic to schedule an appointment.

