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Weekly Safety Tip

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December 4, 2017

SCI Safety Tip: How Loud Can You Play Music Without Damaging Your Hearing?

Source: <https://www.livescience.com>

By: Corey Binns

Date: August 24, 2010

If you're listening to Katy Perry pop or The Red Hot Chili Peppers rock and have to raise your voice to be heard over the music, it's time to turn the volume down. Listening to loud music for too long can damage sensitive structures in the inner ear and lead to permanent hearing loss.

Today, one in five American teens already have some hearing loss, according to a study in August 18 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. That's a 30 percent increase from 15 years ago.

A person exposed to noise levels at 85 decibels or higher for a prolonged period of time is at risk for hearing loss.

How loud is too loud?

You shouldn't listen to music, or be exposed to any noise, at 85 decibels for more than 8 hours at a time, said Gordon Hughes, program officer of clinical trials at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD). If you've got the volume cranked to 88 decibels, then cut your listening time down to 4 hours.

At its loudest, an MP3 player pumps out 105 decibels that's 100 times more intense than 85 decibels.

The trouble is, you may not feel any symptoms or know that you're putting your ears at risk. Young ears are more resilient than older ones.

"It's more difficult for kids to perceive the noxious effect of pollution noise," Hughes said.



SCI Safety Slogan



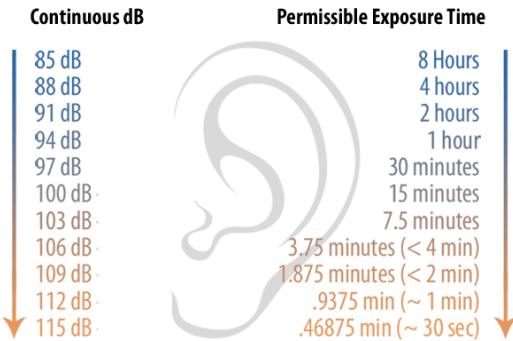
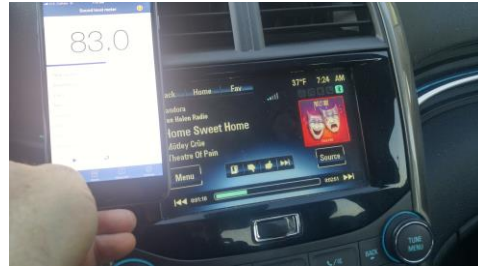
James Lehrke - SCI

What can you do protect your hearing?

"One way you can tell if your music is too loud is if you're talking to a friend and you have to raise your voice to be heard," Hughes said. Normal conversation is around 60 decibels. "That's a crude but helpful way to estimate whether ambient noise is too loud."

You can do online research about your MP3 player to find where the 85-decibel mark is, and keep your volume turned below it.

At rock concerts, keeping your distance from the speakers and wearing some kind of protection can shield your ears. Inserts made of foam are the most common, says Hughes, but the least helpful. "They take the edge off."



Source: <http://dangerousdecibels.org>

An ear muff, or protective head phone will also offer some quiet. But the best option, Hughes said, is to get a custom fit ear mold that fits into your ear canal and can cut down an estimated 60 decibels.

Be on the lookout for signs that you've been listening to tunes too loud. You may notice sounds are muffled and that it's harder to hear. You may also feel pressure or a blocked sensation, and ringing in the ear. "These are hallmarks of temporary hearing damage," Hughes said.

About 26 million Americans between the ages of 20 and 69 have lost the ability to hear high-frequencies from overexposure to loud noises at work or during leisure activities, like turning up their music too loud, according to the NIDCD.

"Prevention is really the name of the game," Hughes said. "Once you've got a hearing impairment from

SCI OSHA Compliance News:

Source: <https://www.desmoinesregister.com>

By: [Lee Rood, lrood@dmreg.com](mailto:lrood@dmreg.com)

Date: Nov. 30, 2017

If you don't think someone is watching, think again. If employees are disgruntled, feeling like their unfairly treated, or concerned for the safety or well-being of their fellow workers you may be looking at an OSHA visit.

City of Des Moines public works employees are reporting fewer injuries, and at least one worker thinks that's no accident.

The anonymous worker contacted Iowa OSHA last month, complaining that public works employees were being written up after they reported getting hurt on the job.

"This practice is preventing employees from coming forward with injuries or illnesses," the informal OSHA complaint read. "Employees believe they are being discriminated against when they report injury or illnesses to the employer."

The worker also contacted Reader's Watchdog alleging that the safety review committee, which determines which injuries should be considered preventable and which are not, is biased. This summer, for example, he said an accident involving one public works employee who tipped over a forklift was considered unpreventable.



The shoulder injury of another worker was considered preventable "with mitigation," which resulted in a letter put in the worker's file, he said. Another worker who said he wasn't sure whether he was injured at home or at work wasn't written up, he said.

The worker's fear: That he or others would lose their jobs while other employees would not.

The workers' complaint bore a look because workplace injuries are drastically under-reported, especially in government, a mix of research shows. The threat of OSHA inspections and higher insurance premiums are two reasons why.

Reported injuries are said to be in a downward spiral since 2004, Bureau of Labor Statistics data suggest. But the number of actual accidents may have changed little because so few are reported, according to a 2008 report on the issue to a U.S. House of Representatives committee.



December is Safe Toys & Celebrations Month

Let's do our part in keeping our kiddos safe this holiday season! Prevention is the first link in the American Heart Association's chain of survival. Did you know, in the past 10 years, a child went to the ER every 45 minutes from a TV falling over. And only 1 in 4 adults take action to secure their TV's.

Safe Kids Worldwide states, "In 2012, 3,270 children 19 and under were seen in emergency rooms for injuries caused by nonelectric holiday decorations, like broken ornaments. In 2012, an estimated 192,000 children were treated in an emergency room for a toy-related injury. And in the same year, an estimated 136,314 children ages 19 and under were injured due to a fire or burn."

According to their website, www.safekids.org, these are the TOP 6 HOUSEHOLD TIPS to follow:

- Natural trees look beautiful and smell great, but they can become a fire hazard if not watered regularly. Make sure your tree has plenty of water. Check it daily!
- Keep holiday candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn, and always blow them out when you leave the room or before you go to sleep.
- Consider your child's age when purchasing a gift this season. Take a minute to read the instructions and look for the recommended age group listed on the package.
- Keep a special eye on small pieces, including [button batteries](#) that may be included in electronic toys. Use a small parts tester to determine whether small toys may present a choking hazard to children under age 3. You can also use the cardboard core of a toilet paper roll – If a toy can pass through, it is too small for young children and may cause them to choke if swallowed.
- [Prevent burns](#) from hot holiday food or liquids by simply use the back burner of your stove and turn pot handles away from the edge.
- Kids are curious and want to play with ornaments on the tree. Move the ornaments that are breakable or have metal hooks towards the top of the tree. Place soft and safe ornaments on the bottom.

Always keep a watchful eye on little ones, childproof your home, and use these tips to help prevent unnecessary trips to the ER!

We read stories like the one [in November](#) reporting work zone injuries are rising in Iowa and we wonder what is special or different about the safety track record of the Des Moines Public Works Department.

City Manager Scott Sanders said he believes injuries are down among public works employees because of more training and "more attention to slips, trips and falls."

He said any sort of judicial system, like the safety review committee, is, by its nature, somewhat subjective. But he said he's not sure how that could be eliminated entirely.

Des Moines' policy does allow employees to be disciplined if they are injured at work through their own negligence. They also can be disciplined if they fail to report an injury. Iowa law authorizes an "appointing authority" — i.e., the city manager — to discipline an employee "due to any act or failure to act by the employee that is in contravention of the law, city policies, or standard operating procedures" or otherwise unfit for employment.

But Section 88.9 of the Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Act also states that "no person shall discharge or in any manner discriminate against any employee because such employee has filed any complaint ... or because of any right afforded by this act."

In this case, Iowa OSHA encouraged the worker to lodge a formal complaint if he wants his allegations further investigated and noted that he can remain anonymous or go to his union representative for help.

Sanders said he knows of no public works employee who has been fired for an on-the-job injury, but he did note workers can be disciplined for not reporting in a timely manner.

He said the city is self-insured so workers' compensation costs aren't to blame.

But injuries can cost self-insured cities and counties big time, especially if they happen on the job. The only difference is the city pays the claim, with certain caps, instead of an insurance company.

Is this city's process as fair as it could be?

We'll see what happens once Iowa OSHA takes a look.

We'd always like your feedback. Let us know what articles you'd like to see!

In Loving Memory...
Jessica, Kristin a k

