

**Northwestern Medical Group
Audiology Service
Department of Otolaryngology
675 N. St. Clair, Suite 15-200
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-695-8107**

HEARING DEVICE DISPENSING POLICY

EVALUATION: The Audiology Service within the Department of Otolaryngology offers a comprehensive audiologic program for individuals with hearing loss and/or tinnitus. The components of the program include: (1) detailed hearing evaluation, (2) determination of an individual's potential benefit from hearing device use and (3) an evaluation of performance with amplification. When indicated, a hearing device(s) will be recommended based on an individuals' needs.

ADJUSTMENT PERIOD: Following the completion of the evaluation procedures, the prospective hearing device user is advised to obtain the selected hearing device(s). There is a 30-day trial period. The user is asked to return to Northwestern Medicine during this trial period to verify benefit from amplification. With the guidance of the provider, the individual will decide to keep, exchange, or return the device(s). If the devices are returned, a \$200 user fee is charged per hearing device and the remaining amount is refunded.

PAYMENT: **Payment of the full cost of the hearing device(s) is required at the time that the hearing device(s) are dispensed. The cost of hearing devices, related appointments, and accessories are NOT covered by Medicare. Payment may be made in cash, by check or with a major credit card.** It is the patient's responsibility to contact their insurance company to determine if they have hearing device benefits and whether Northwestern Medicine is an in-network provider for hearing device(s). If the patient has insurance coverage for hearing device(s), the patient would need to submit an individual claim for the hearing device(s) if they decide to purchase them through Northwestern Medicine.

CREDENTIALS: Evaluations are conducted by audiologists with a Doctorate in Audiology (Au.D.) degree, or by audiology doctoral students working under the supervision of a person with this credential. All services provided prior to the dispensing of the recommended products are those deemed necessary and appropriate by the supervising audiologist. Each provider is licensed as an audiologist by the State of Illinois Professional Regulation Board.

On the reverse side of this page the typical sequence of appointments, fees and procedures are described for clients seen at this facility.

TYPICAL SEQUENCE OF APPOINTMENTS FOR HEARING DEVICE CANDIDATES

1. Basic Audiologic Evaluation Fee: varies with service (billed to insurance typically) Time: 1 hour

- Complete audiologic assessment of hearing.
- Communication needs assessment.
- Initial discussion of hearing aid candidacy (if indicated).

---NOTE: The Illinois Department of Public Health requires that audiologic evaluation be performed within 6 months of the purchase of any new hearing device.

2. Hearing Device Selection Fee: \$100.00 Time: 1 hour
(assumes current--less than 6 months old--results of audiologic evaluation are available)

- In-depth counseling regarding amplification options.
- Further evaluation to determine desirable appropriate hearing device characteristics.
- Recommendation of specific hearing aid and/or assistive listening device (if indicated).
- Ear impression (if indicated).
- Preliminary counseling regarding hearing device use and adjustment (if indicated).

3. Hearing Device Fitting Fee: Payment of device(s) due at visit Time: 1 - 1.5 hour

- Hearing device(s) and/or earmold(s) fitted.
- Objective measurements of hearing device performance with patient is obtained.
- In-depth counseling regarding hearing device use and adjustment.
- Payment in full for hearing device is expected (cost varies—typical range is \$1000 to \$3500 each).

4. Hearing Device Recheck Fee: None Time: 1/2 hour

- Follow-up appointment(s) scheduled during trial period.
- Continued consultation regarding hearing device use and individual's adjustment to amplification.
- Physical inspection of hearing instrument.
- Final purchase decision.

PLEASE NOTE: The Food and Drug Administration recommends that it is in the best interest of a hearing aid candidate to be evaluated by a licensed physician (preferably a physician who specializes in diseases of the ear) before purchasing a hearing aid. If you are interested in purchasing a hearing aid, please bring this medical clearance for hearing aid use with you to your appointment.