

16 million people in Middle East already suffer from this invisible hearing disability

Starkey aims to bring the attention back to one of the most taken for granted organs during 'World Hearing Day'



Dubai, Mar 6, 2020 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Hearing is vital to communicating, sharing and engaging with the world around us. It opens us to an infinity of experiences and plays a major role in our physical and mental health, relationships, and overall quality of life. Started in 2007 by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Hearing Day aims to raise awareness and promote ear and hearing care around the world. Close to 16 million people in the Middle East suffer from this invisible disabling - hearing loss.

This condition may result from genetic causes, complications at birth, certain infectious diseases, chronic ear infections, the use of particular drugs, exposure to excessive noise, and aging.

Giscard Bechara, Director, Starkey MEA FZCO stated that “At Starkey, we believe that hearing health is essential to overall health and wellness. Unfortunately, unlike any other health condition hearing disabilities are left untreated till the person loses his complete sense of hearing in most cases. Starkey Hearing Technologies has been 100% focused on better hearing since its founding over 50 years ago — and, since 1984, Starkey has traveled non-stop around the world, delivering the gift of hearing to the most vulnerable among us, all so more people across the world may hear.”

As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), around 466 million people worldwide have disabling hearing loss, and 34 million out of these are children. Also, up to 60% of childhood hearing loss is due to preventable causes. Another upcoming challenge is that 1.1 billion young people (aged between 12–35 years) are at risk of hearing loss due to exposure to noise in recreational settings. It is estimated that by 2050 over 900 million people will have disabling hearing loss.

“Hearing loss is considered to be an invisible condition that occurs gradually over time. It isn’t something you can see. Your hearing typically changes slowly over time and that makes it harder to realize that you are ‘losing your power of hearing. What each person experiences as their first signs of hearing loss varies from person to person,” added Giscard.

Recent research from Johns Hopkins reveals that hearing loss is also linked with walking problems, falls and even dementia. In a study that tracked 639 adults for nearly 12 years, experts from Johns Hopkins found that mild hearing loss doubled dementia risk. Moderate hearing loss tripled risk, and people with severe hearing impairment were five times more likely to develop dementia.

Common symptoms that could indicate hearing loss:

- You frequently ask others to repeat themselves
- Difficulty hearing and understanding
- Ringing in the ears
- Others complaining that you are not hearing well
- Trouble hearing on the phone
- Turning up the television too loud
- Avoiding social situations that may be too noisy
- The perception that most people mumble/or don’t enunciate well
- Trouble hearing in noisy environments
- Unable to hear people when they are not looking at you

Giscard also encouraged people to take care of their ear health, “It’s important to use hearing protection around loud sounds such as turn the volume down on the TV, radio, music, etc. It’s better to limit your time exposed to loud sounds. Also when listening to loud sounds such as music concerts and fitness classes, then it is better to take breaks from the noise. Also its better to give your ears time to recover after being exposed to loud noises. Keep moving, as exercise keeps the blood pumping throughout the body, including the ears. This keeps the internal parts of the ears healthy. Most importantly get your hearing tested, especially if you experience a change in your hearing, ringing or fullness in your ears for over 24 hours. Because it is gradual, it's important to be aware of hearing loss signs.”

Starkey’s mission and philosophy for 50+ years is ‘so the world may hear’. The company was able to bring smiles back to their faces, after years of struggles that these patients were suffering from.

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