



Girls' Night Out? I Hear You Loud and Clear

New hearing devices make it easier to enjoy your night out with friends.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIN KIRKLAND

Your social life doesn't need to be defined by hearing loss. Hearing providers Hillary Wright and Colleen Newman from Oakland Hearing Aid Center say you can enjoy social engagements more confidently than ever thanks to advancements in technology. So, get the pinot grigio ready ladies — it's time to plan a girls' night out.

It's no secret, women tend to be verbal communicators and that hearing is an

essential part of social interaction — yet hearing loss is one of the most common physical conditions. According to the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, nearly 30 million adults in the U.S. could benefit from hearing aids.

Contemporary hearing options, however, offer greater convenience and ease in noisy environments as well as enhanced designs for discretion. "The latest advancements in technology allow us to live our lives with more freedom and confidence than ever before," Newman says.

Much like Bluetooth headphones, many hearing devices now connect to cellphones to monitor phone calls, music streaming and assist with background noise. As rechargeable hearing aids gain popularity, chargers are also more compact and convenient.

Just as eyeglasses progressed with lens technology and modern frame styles, hearing devices are also evolving with the times. "Assistive listening device accessories, compatible with hearing aids, have improved technology to help with

most needs for more severe losses," Wright says. "A night out with friends can be more enjoyable with the help from these devices."

Not only do hearing aids come in several colors to match most hair and skin tones, hearing manufacturers now offer different model types to suit style preferences. Depending on your specific needs, styles range from behind the ear, where the case of the device is worn at the back of the ear, to invisible in canal, an even more discreet style that's molded to fit in the ear canal and is essentially unnoticeable.

Simply put, hearing technology isn't what it used to be. Times have changed, and there has never been a better time to get checked, update your hearing aids — and plan your next girls' night out.



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