

2018 WORLD HEARING DAY: WITH UNADDRESSED HEARING LOSS EVEN EATING AND GETTING DRESSED BECOME OBSTACLES.

THE EXPERTS STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTION AND TREATMENT.

Milan, February 28th, 2018 - Eating, getting dressed and taking a shower. Things that everyone does every day, can turn into real obstacles with an unaddressed hearing loss. Based on an **international study¹**, which will be presented to the European Parliament on the **World Hearing Day 2018**, **unaddressed hearing loss raises by 28% the risk of not being able to carry out the simplest daily activities**. The failure to use hearing aids also increases the risk of **dementia (+21%)** and, in men, **depression (+43%)**. Despite the risks associated with unaddressed hearing loss, not enough people use hearing aids today. In Italy, for example, out of the 7 million people suffering from hearing loss, 5 million do not use hearing solutions, thus exposing themselves to the risk of diminished independence and autonomy.

World Hearing Day. “*Hear the future... and prepare for it*” is the theme of the World Hearing Day to be held on Saturday, March 3rd. The center of the discussion, therefore, is prevention in order to slow the exponential growth in hearing loss worldwide. This year, WHO will highlight the dramatic trend of rising hearing loss prevalence which can be slowed by taking simple actions such as, using earplugs in noisy places, getting periodic hearing tests and limiting the use of ototoxic drugs. In case of a hearing impairment, it is necessary to intervene promptly and resort to hearing aids, which nowadays are highly technological devices, basically invisible and customizable according to the needs of any person.

The study. Autonomy, cognitive abilities and mood are the areas most affected by untreated hearing loss. “*The study involved more than 3,500 individuals who were observed for 25 years: the results not only confirm that there is a connection between hearing loss, depression and cognitive deficits, but also introduces a new element. It shows, in fact, that people with untreated hearing loss have a higher risk of not being able to complete simple daily activities, like eating, getting dressed and taking a shower. Therefore, in case of an alleged hearing loss - states Alessandro Martini, Head of the Neuroscience and Sensory Organs Department, Professor of Otolaryngology at the University of Padua - an early action, like a check-up and the adoption of a hearing solution if necessary, is imperative. These solutions not only make it possible to hear again but, based on the results of this important study, also help to protect against decreased autonomy and developing some form of dementia or depression*”.

Prevention. The numbers for hearing loss are constantly on the rise due to the aging population and potentially harmful lifestyle choices like listening to loud music and using ototoxic drugs. “*As hearing difficulties continue to increase, working on prevention and protecting people from harmful habits like listening to loud music with headphones, is crucial. In Europe, for example, it is estimated that more than 4 million people suffer from hearing disorders caused by the improper use of headphones. In addition to not using headphones for long periods of time, - continues Martini - it’s also advisable to stay at a safe distance from speakers and amplifiers, as well as see a specialist if the discomfort persists after having been in a noisy environment. It is also recommended that anyone using hearing aids should have their devices checked periodically by a hearing care specialist and adjusted based on its current needs*”.

¹ Death, Depression, Disability and Dementia Associated With Self-Reported Hearing Loss Problems: A 25-Year Study, Hélène Amieva et al., The Journals Of Gerontology, Series A, gennaio 2018

About Amplifon

Amplifon, listed on the STAR segment of the Italian Stock Exchange, is the global leader in hearing solutions and services for retail expertise, customization and consumer care. Through a network of over 9,900 points of sale, of which approximately 4,200 direct stores, 3,800 service centers and 1,900 affiliates, Amplifon is active in 22 countries across EMEA (Italy, France, the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Hungary, Egypt, Turkey, Poland and Israel), Americas (U.S.A., Canada and Brazil) and APAC (Australia, New Zealand and India). With more than 7,000 hearing care professionals, the Group is committed to delivering the highest quality of service and care, in order to achieve the best hearing experience for customers worldwide. More information about the Group is available at: www.amplifon.com/corporate.

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