

TOP 10 THINGS

YOU MUST KNOW
BEFORE CHOOSING AN
AUDIOLOGIST



Introductory Letter From Dr. Darrow

Dear Hearing Loss or Tinnitus Researcher,

If you are reading this report, chances are high that you or a loved one are experiencing the symptoms of hearing loss or Tinnitus. I applaud you for doing your research, and educating yourself prior to making such an important medical decision. This particular report, *'Top 10 Things You Must Know Before Choosing an Audiologist,'* was written as a helpful guide for you and your family as you begin the journey toward the medical treatment of hearing loss and Tinnitus.

My purpose as a national leader in hearing health care is to improve the lives and protect the brain health of our aging generations so that they may live, engage, and interact with their families, friends, and loved ones for many years to come. My specific specialty, and doctoral degree from a joint Harvard Medical and M.I.T. program, is in Speech and Hearing Bioscience. This focus on neuroscience allows me to provide patients or family members like yourself the medical education and treatment of hearing loss, tinnitus, and the associated cognitive decline.

After interacting with hundreds of thousands of patients and family members throughout the world on my national speaking, media, and education tour, I've summarized the top ten most important questions to understand before choosing a local audiologist for you or a loved ones' hearing loss or Tinnitus treatment.

Yours in Hearing and Cognitive Health,



Harvard-MIT
Health Sciences & Technology



Northeastern University



Massachusetts
Eye and Ear



BRIGHAM AND
WOMEN'S HOSPITAL



Dr. Keith Darrow

Dr. Keith Darrow, PhD, CCC-A

M.I.T. and Harvard Medical Trained

Neuroscientist and Clinical Audiologist

Learn More about your hearing loss or Tinnitus, or schedule a treatment consultation with one of my offices, visit www.hearmaine.com or call my team at **(207) 739-4430**

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Are They A Specialist?

Tools have never created the skill. They're simply a conduit teaming with education, talent, experience, and knowledge. Audiology tools have never made an audiologist, but when the best tools are in the hands of the best specialists, magic happens.

All hearing specialists should be licensed by the state in which they practice, but not all hearing specialists have taken the next step to become members of the Excellence in Audiology network. This organization of hearing health care specialists have both the state-of-the-art tools and proven knowledge to do more than sell you a traditional hearing aid – their comprehensive hearing and cognitive treatment programs improve your hearing and cognitive function so you can **maintain your independence longer – *that independence is priceless!***

In order to be a part of this network, a hearing specialist must be thoroughly tested to demonstrate their knowledge of the audiology system, clinical skills, and judgment. In addition to finding a local Excellence in Audiology specialist, you might consider a specialist who understands the hearing and brain connection as 'hearing loss' was recently named the single most modifiable risk factor for the prevention of the mind-robbing disease of Dementia.

Signs of a specialist:

- Excellence in Audiology Member
- Certified Dementia Practitioner
- Incorporates Cognitive Screenings into testing protocols
- Offers Comprehensive Hearing and Cognitive Treatment Programs;
not just traditional hearing aids
- Treatment Programs include ongoing brain training exercises
- Treatment technology is updated over time; without additional fees!



Do They Have A Medical Office *(or a sales office)*?

For years, the profession of audiology has received a bad reputation for its focus on the sale of traditional hearing aids by former used-car salesmen. In the audiology world it is not hard to open up shop on a shoe-string budget and call yourself a 'hearing aid specialist'.

When determining your family's next hearing health care specialist, I recommend you understand the treatment philosophy and purpose of the founder or specialist. Take the time to research his/her office, treatment team, website, location, and online testimonials and reviews. During your research, be on the lookout for stand-a-lone location or a medical setting that was founded many years ago and has helped thousands of individuals in your community.

Medical-based offices will focus on the signs and symptoms of hearing loss and Tinnitus, the detrimental impact of un-treated and under-treated health conditions. You will notice that medical-based offices include many free reports, books, videos and educational opportunities to learn more about you or a loved ones' condition. **Remember, the educated patient is the best patient.**

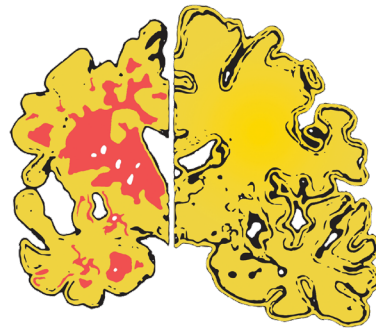
Sales-based offices will focus on the makes, models, and prices of their traditional hearing aid technologies. I often refer to these providers and offices as 'widget salesmen'. The word 'FREE Test-Drive', 'FREE Demo', or 'Try Before You Buy' will be on their sales materials and advertising.



Do They Think Brain Health First?

It might seem strange, but we don't actually 'hear' with our ears. The ears are just a receptor of sound, which is then transferred to our auditory nerve, and finally into our brain, where the speech understanding and cognitive process of deciphering sounds into words takes place. As a neuroscientist who holds a Ph.D. in Speech and Hearing Bioscience this is very easy for me to understand, but to many hearing specialists without formal training or membership in a community like the Excellence in Audiology network it is often overlooked.

While words like Dementia, cognitive decline, cognitive overload, progressive degenerative disorders and auditory system damage might seem scary, rest assured a hearing specialist and his/her team who thinks 'Brain Health First' will undoubtedly be using these words when discussing your hearing and Tinnitus symptoms with you. If your specialist is not using these words, or is focused on things like lifestyle charts, bluetooth, rechargeable batteries and TV adapters you will know they are thinking 'hearing aids first' and not 'Brain Health First'.



Brain With Hearing Loss Brain With Normal Hearing

Finding a local specialist who thinks 'Brain Health First' will make sure you and/or your loved one is not only improving your hearing, but also doing everything possible to reduce the increased risk of cognitive decline and Dementia associated with hearing loss and auditory system damage. Treatment options from a 'Brain Health First' specialist will include the most recent NeuroTechnology™ process, designed with the cognitive (brain) aspects of hearing loss in mind, including restoring the ability to hear in noise, filtering out background sounds, and boosting the soft-speech details needed to understand those around you.

Questions to ask:

1. **What cognitive screening protocols do you use in your office?**

Answers should include: "Cognivue," "Word Recognition Testing," "Speech in Noise Testing"

2. **Does your treatment plan include NeuroTechnology™?**

Answers should include: Our treatment plans include NeuroTechnology™ (or treatment technology)

Do They Provide Pre-Appointment Education?

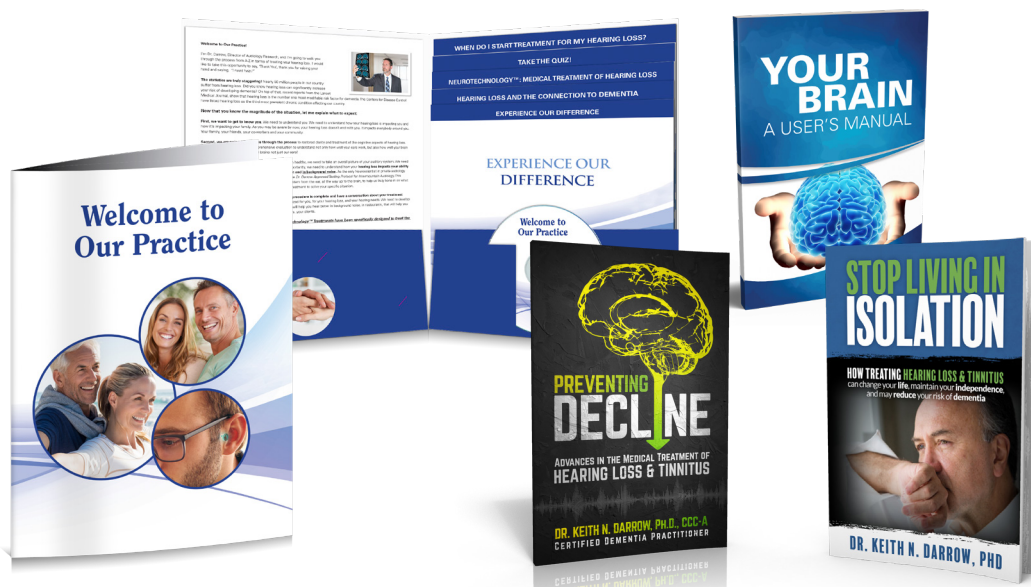
Most traditional hearing aid sales offices will be in a hurry to get you right in for a “FREE Hearing Test”. This is so they have the first chance to ‘sell’ you on their traditional hearing aid.

My recommendation is to find a medical-based office with a hearing health care specialist who goes out of their way to provide you pre-appointment education to help you and your family make the best decision on this major medical decision.

Some items I recommend requesting prior to your appointment:

1. 7-14 day delay before your appointment to review all materials sent to you
2. A book or publication by the practice owner or founder
3. Any online presentations or educational materials available
4. What is included in their comprehensive treatment program
5. The cost of their all-inclusive monthly treatment plan
6. What to expect during your first appointment

It won't take you long to differentiate which office is focused on providing you education and conversation as opposed to those looking to get you in as soon as possible.



Do They Offer Guarantees? If So, What Are They?

No matter which hearing specialist you choose, ultimately you are beginning a relationship with them. A relationship based upon a significant investment of both time and money to solve you or a loved ones' hearing loss or Tinnitus. As with any relationship, it should be based upon trust and a guarantee that you will experience the outcome you are looking for.

The most common attempt at a guarantee in the field of hearing health care and audiology is a "traditional hearing aid return period." This is NOT a guarantee, this is a law required by every hearing health care specialist who is selling a traditional hearing aid widget.

When I speak of a 'guarantee' I am referring to the commitment of the founder, or owner, or hearing health care specialist you choose.

1. Do they guarantee your ability to hear will be restored to its potential?
2. Do they guarantee if you are unhappy at any point during the adaptation period you will part ways as friends and not spend a single penny for treatment received so far?
3. Do they guarantee your hearing and tinnitus treatment is fully-covered with no additional fees during your treatment program?
4. Do they guarantee that if at any time during your four-year treatment plan that your hearing loss or Tinnitus progresses severely enough that it requires a new prescription you will get that new prescription without increased monthly fees?
5. Do they guarantee that your monthly cost of treatment will never increase due to rising costs or inflation?



Now those are guarantees!

Are They Using The Latest Treatment Options Available?

Modern hearing loss diagnosis and treatment differs a great deal from years past. With the evolution of computer-designed technologies, hearing specialists with the proper equipment will be able to more accurately diagnose, treat, and improve your hearing and cognitive functions. Be on the lookout for a hearing specialist with modern technology and office vibe as opposed to someone who is stuck with antiquated technologies that will hold you back from living your best and healthiest life.

Modern technologies that should be used by a hearing specialist include:

- Speech in Noise Testing to determine your ability to hear in noise
- Cognitive Screening with Cognivue® Equipment
- NeuroTechnology™ based treatment technology to focus on restoring stimulation to the auditory system; improving hearing and reducing Tinnitus
- Pre and Post Treatment Testing to prove your results both in the testing booth and in background noise
- Audioscan Verifit2 Real-Ear Measurements to objectively measure the benefit of your new treatment
- Live-Speech Mapping to verify you are hearing the spoken language
- BrainHQ Brain Training Program for ongoing memory and processing speed improvements



Do They Offer A Comprehensive Treatment Membership?

Long gone are the days of spending thousands of dollars upfront on traditional hearing aids, don't do it!

Hearing loss is the third most common chronic condition affecting seniors in our community. Like any major medical condition, the treatment of hearing loss, tinnitus, the associated cognitive impacts are not a one and done purchase of a hearing aid widget, but rather an ongoing monthly medical treatment. When you are searching for a hearing health care specialist, I recommend you find one who has a monthly treatment program or membership that allows you to begin treatment without investing thousands of dollars on day one.

An All-Inclusive Treatment Membership should include everything you need to properly treat your hearing and Tinnitus, including:

1. Your prescribed hearing technology
2. Any supplies, accessories, or batteries you'll need
3. Coverage for loss or damage at a low deductible
4. All of your office visits and annual evaluations
5. Yearly Cognitive/Dementia Risk Screenings
6. And other various benefits:
 - a. Early access to events
 - b. Birthday gifts
 - c. Special New Release education materials
 - d. Supplements
 - e. BrainHQ
7. A price lock guarantee so you don't have to worry about price increases in the future

**NO
ADDITIONAL
FEES**

Do You Get A Direct Phone Number For 24/7 Support Or Questions?

Unlike vision and other senses, hearing is 24/7, and so should your support line.

Each time a patient embarks on the journey of improved hearing or reduced Tinnitus, there is an adaption period for the patient and their family. This period can take up to 60 days, and is unique to each patient. Whether you or your loved one have a simple question, or need reassurance, your hearing health care specialist should give you a direct number to a patient experience coordinator just in case.

In addition to the complex hearing and cognitive changes that will happen as we begin restoring the stimulation to your auditory system, there can be moments of minor irritation or discomfort similar to wearing a new pair of shoes or prescription eye glasses. Whatever question or concern you have, don't hesitate to ask!

A medical-based hearing health care specialist will provide you the means for direct support, as well as an established new treatment plan consisting of 3-4 appointments during the first 45-60 days of treatment. You should plan to visit your specialist 4 times per year for ongoing maintenance, re-evaluations, and prescription updates in addition to any fun or interactive patient events they may offer.

Remember, you should not have to pay additional fees or costs for this direct phone number, visits, patient events or ongoing hearing health care. It should be included in your comprehensive monthly treatment plan.



Do They Make You Feel Special And Comfortable?

Regardless if you are reading this report for your own hearing loss or Tinnitus treatment, for a spouse, or another family member you are the most important part of the health care practice.

The best hearing health care specialists, practices, and teams would be wise to remember that without the patient they would not have careers. As I've traveled the country speaking, educating, and working with private practices I continue to teach based upon the principles of Disney Magic, the Ritz Carlton Gold Standard, and the Empathy found at the Cleveland Clinic.

When you walk into your new hearing health care specialist's office, you should be made to feel comfortable and welcomed. Empathy, Compassion, and Understanding are very important to the healing process.

Here are some things I recommend you should receive:

1. Pre-Appointment Information
2. Welcome Gift
3. A Great look, feel, and smell to the office
4. A Big Thank You
5. Treat or Drink
6. Walked to Your Treatment Room
7. They should get to know you the person
8. Understand your symptoms and desired outcome
9. A Fond Farewell to Return

If you'd like the feedback of others prior to booking an appointment, try visiting their online views or video testimonials to learn more about what to expect at your appointment.

Do They Have A Great Reputation?

"Trust; but Verify!"

When it comes to choosing a hearing health care specialist I prefer no other phrase.

With the internet today, it is extremely easy to pull up ratings, reviews, and testimonials from other patients. Simply go to Google, Facebook, HealthyHearing, or Yelp and search for audiology reviews in your town. **I would recommend choosing the hearing health care specialist with the most reviews at the highest rating.** This gives me comfort in knowing that they are busy enough to get the most reviews, and great enough to earn that high 5-star reputation.

At the time of writing this report, every Excellence in Audiology member-clinic has the most 5-Star reviews in their city. No other network of hearing health care specialists even comes close to this number of reviews.

In addition, with the growth of YouTube, many practices now have a YouTube channel full of real life patients on video giving their own personal testimonial about the hearing health care specialist and office. So, remember, trust that your research has fulfilled the first nine questions of this report, but don't hesitate to verify with real patient review, testimonials and references.

And never be shy about asking for references- and go directly to the source! You have the right to call any hearing health care specialist and ask for a list of references who may be patients and/or local physicians who have volunteered to help advise other patients as they first enter the world of hearing loss and tinnitus treatment.

Maine's Highest Rated Hearing Health Care Office

Google ★★★★★ facebook ★★★★★

 Healthy Hearing ★★★★★

 YouTube ★★★★★

 yelp ★★★★★

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BONUS: Will They Make Treatment Affordable For Us?

I realize this report is titled the *'Top 10 Things You Must Know Before Choosing an Audiologist'*, but I couldn't leave out some tips on making sure your choice of hearing health care specialist **never allows a treatment decision to become a financial decision.**

Once you are comfortable knowing the answers to the Top-10 questions and have chosen a hearing health care specialist to treat you, your spouse, or your loved one, the next questions is typically:

"Is this comprehensive treatment plan affordable?"

When it comes to affordability, there was no greater pain in my years as an audiologist than having to turn a patient away due to their financial situation. Luckily, the top hearing health care specialists in the country have now joined a financial program called Allegro Advantage Leasing Program. This program ensures that top hearing health care providers around the country can ensure that a treatment decision never becomes a financial decision.

Benefits of Subscription Based Hearing Healthcare:

- Avoid the Large Upfront Cost of Traditional Hearing Aids.
- Low Monthly Subscription Plans for the Medical Treatment of Hearing Loss and Tinnitus
- All-Inclusive Coverage for your Hearing and Tinnitus Treatment Needs
- Price Lock Guarantee so Your Treatment Costs Won't Increase Over Time
- No Patient is Denied the Care they Need due to Bad Credit/No Credit

Remember to ask your local hearing health care specialist if they offer the Allegro Advantage Leasing Program.

Ask Your Hearing Specialist if They Offer:

Allegro Advantage Leasing Program

Closing Letter From Dr. Darrow

Dear Hearing Loss or Tinnitus Researcher,

I hope this report has helped you increase your knowledge of hearing health care options.

To accomplish my purpose as a national leader in hearing and brain health care, it is my truly my privilege to do what I love as a neuroscientist, audiologist, and university professor.

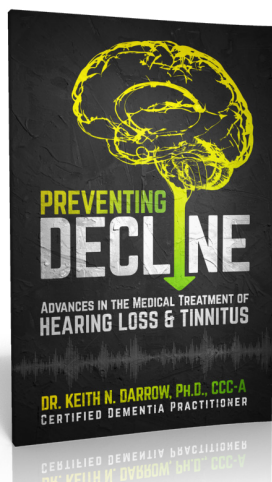
If you'd like to learn more about the medical treatment of hearing loss, Tinnitus, and the associated cognitive decline please request a copy of my Amazon.com Best-Selling book.

Yours in Hearing and Cognitive Health,



Dr. Keith Darrow

Dr. Keith Darrow, PhD, CCC-A
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Neuroscientist and Clinical Audiologist



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