

TAKING AN AUDIOMETRIC TEST

Taking an Audiometric Test

- What an audiometric test is
- Why it's important to you
- What you should expect
 - Pre-test examination
 - Audiometric test
- Results
 - Understanding the numbers
 - Translating the numbers
- Benefits



What an Audiometric Test is

- A test for determining your hearing sensitivity
 - Determines how well you can hear
- A very useful tool in the hearing conservation program
 - Can identify when your hearing is being compromised

Why It's Important to You

- Audiometric testing identifies...
 - Progressive noise-induced hearing losses before they become an impairment
 - Temporary losses before they become permanent, providing time for remedial steps
- Without regular audiometric testing you may not know your hearing is being compromised until it is too late!

What You Should Expect

Pre-test examination

- The examiner will ask you questions as part of the evaluation...
 - Ear, nose, & throat problems such as colds, infections, and congestion?
 - Noisy hobbies or activities?
 - Time since exposure to loud noise?
- The examiner may also visually check your outer ear canal with an otoscope for...
 - Ear infections
 - Excessive earwax
 - Obstructions in the ear canal



What You Should Expect

Audiometric Test

- You will sit in a quiet booth and be equipped with a headset and a signal switch
- You will hear tones of varying level and frequency
- You will be instructed to depress the signal switch to indicate a tone was heard
- Be honest; don't try to anticipate or intentionally miss a tone, or the test will be invalid



Photo courtesy of NIOSH

Audiometric Test Results

- Your audiogram will be used to indicate hearing change
 - A Temporary Threshold Shift (TTS)
 - A temporary reduction in hearing due to fatigue of the ear caused by noise exposure
 - Temporary hearing loss – indicates the potential for permanent loss
 - A Standard Threshold Shift (STS)
 - A change in hearing sensitivity for the worse relative to the baseline audiogram
 - An average change of 10 dB or more at 2, 3, and 4 kHz in either ear

Audiometric Test Results

- The audiogram (a graph or table of your audiometric test results) will be available to you and your employer

PROBLEM NOW? <input type="checkbox"/> NO	COMMENTS
DO YOU HAVE ANY NOISY HOBBIES? <input type="checkbox"/> YES IF YES, EXPLAIN <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANOTHER NOISY JOB WITH ANOTHER COMPANY? <input type="checkbox"/> YES IF YES, EXPLAIN <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
COMMENTS:	
IF YOUR NAME AND SOC. SEC. NO. WERE PREPRINTED, PLEASE CHECK FOR ERRORS AND MAKE CORRECTIONS.	REVIEWERS SIGNATURE
EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	

Normal

LEFT EAR							RIGHT EAR							ANSI 1969
500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	
10	10	15	10	15	25	10	5	0	10	10	15	20	10	

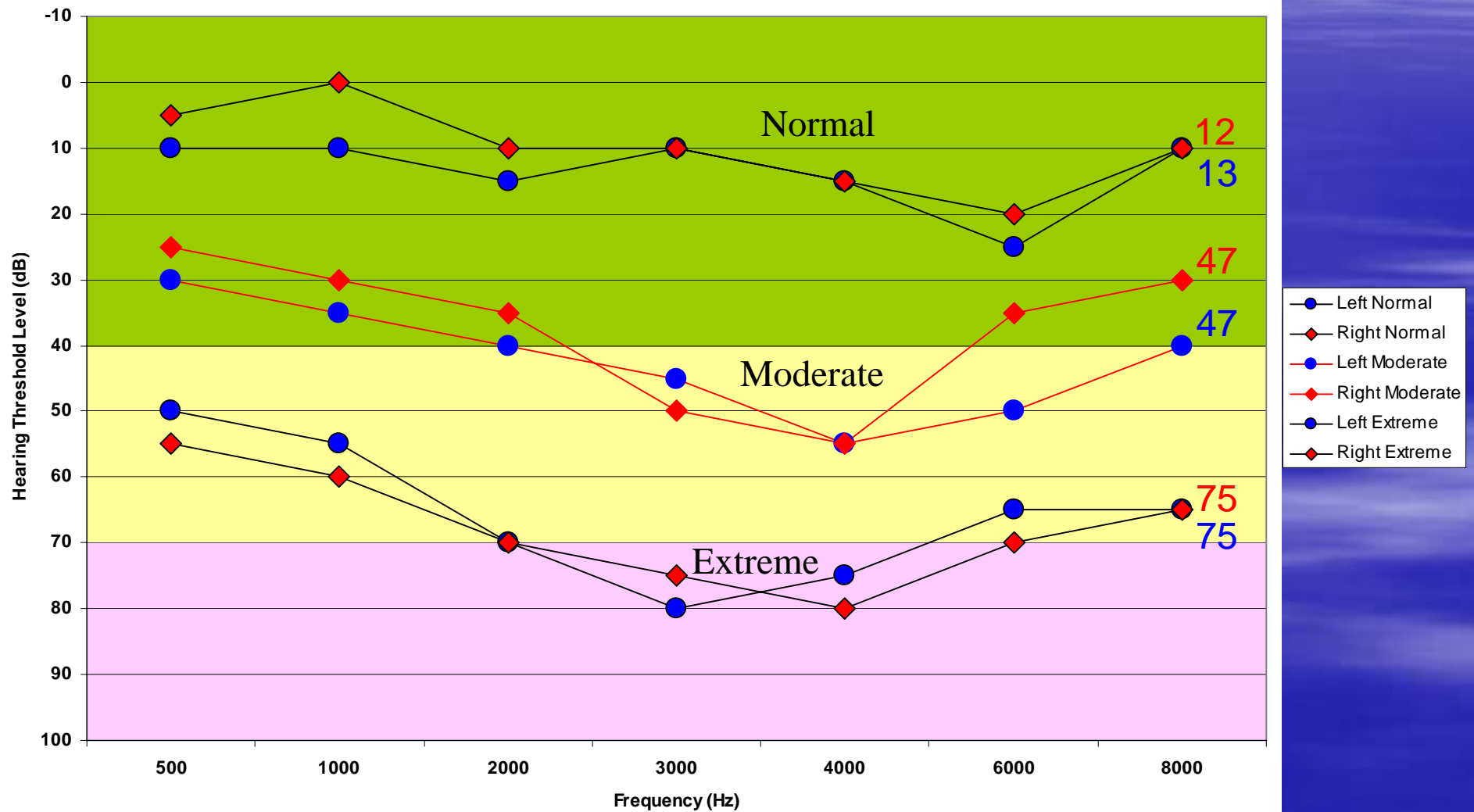
Moderate

LEFT EAR							RIGHT EAR							ANSI 1969
500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	
30	35	40	45	55	50	40	25	30	35	50	55	35	30	

Extreme

LEFT EAR							RIGHT EAR							ANSI 1969
500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	500	1000	2000	3000	4000	6000	8000	
50	55	70	80	75	65	65	55	60	70	75	80	70	65	

Understanding the Numbers



Translating the Numbers

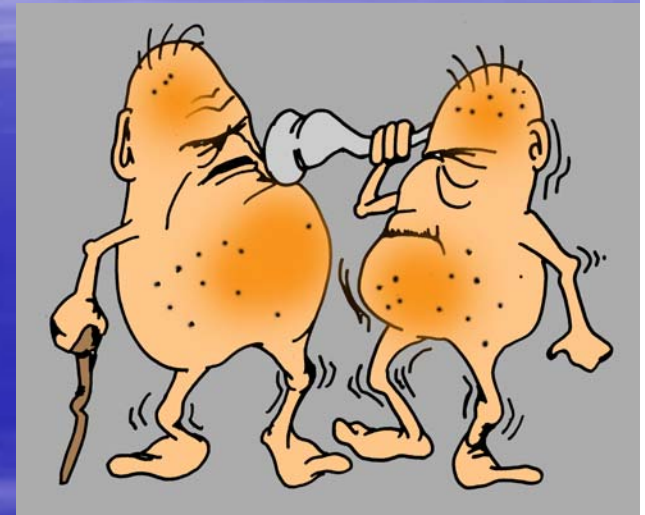
<u>Hearing</u>	<u>Hearing Loss (dB)</u>	<u>Level</u>
Normal	0 to 25	Whisper
Mild loss	26 to 40	Quiet Speech
Moderate	41 to 55	Normal speech
Moderately Severe	56 to 70	Loud speech
Severe	71 to 90	Shouting
Profound	91+	Road drill

Impairment re: thresholds based on ANSI 1996

Values are based on an average level of hearing at 2, 3, & 4 kHz in either ear.

Benefits of Taking an Audiometric Test

- Preventing the adverse affects
 - Tinnitus – ringing in the ears
 - Temporary hearing loss
 - Shouting to communicate with others during and after work
 - Permanent hearing loss
 - Isolation from loved ones and everyday life
 - Permanently handicapped, there is no cure
 - Not even hearing aids can restore the quality of life to the level of natural hearing
 - Is preventive action required?
 - Use of proper hearing protection devices
 - Follow up exam with audiologist
 - Removal from high noise areas



Taking an Audiometric Test

- Miners' hearing is precious and we need to work together to preserve their quality of life

