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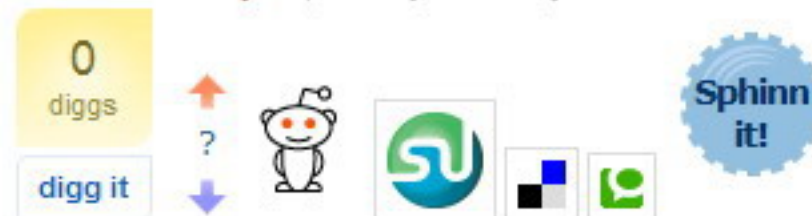
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Loud, excessive and constant music results in hearing loss

Posted on [January 8th, 2008](#) by [heckwithyou](#)



Excessive and constant sound to ears at a close distance has been long considered to be affecting the sensitivity of the ears. Lately, it is becoming more and more obvious.

One out of 5 teenagers in France suffers from hearing problems because of exposure to excessively loud volumes on personal stereos and in night-clubs and rock concerts, a leading expert warned Monday.

"As per the estimates, between 10 and 20 percent of adolescents have damaged hearing. And that's not counting those who suffer from tinnitus and hyperacusis (over-sensitivity to certain sounds)," Professor Christian Huggonet, an acoustic engineer, told *Le Figaro* newspaper.

"Company doctors have noticed an increase in poor hearing among young people applying for jobs in which a good ear is required. And suppliers of hearing aids all agree their clients are getting younger," he said.

Those who are constantly exposed to loud noises, like the conductors from several musical conservatories also describe recent problems in getting their players to distinguish and play nuances in sound in the quietest registers.

One of the most serious problems is the standardization of sound "compression" in which weak signals are boosted to the level of stronger ones. The technique is now the norm in MP3 and other music formats popular with young people, according to Huggonet.

"Once the ear has got accustomed to this kind of sound, it finds it very hard to return to sounds of weak intensity... Compressed sound also creates stress and fatigue, because there's no let-up till it stops," Huggonet said.

Another fallout: "Young children who are used to watching cartoons with compressed sound can end up speaking in the same loud monotone way in which their ears have been trained," he said.

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