LISTEN, TIME TO TONE DOWN
PROTECT EARS FROM PROLONGED NOISE

Mark Bunker

YOU only have to step outside during peak hour traffic, go to a live music venue or use a power tool to realise we live in a noisy world, which bombards our ears with potentially damaging sounds.

With one in six Australians suffering hearing loss, audiologist Michael Wong knows how important it is to avoid exposing ourselves to loud noise for too long.

Mr Wong, of Alpha Hearing in Mount Waverley, commonly tests patients for a range of conditions such as presbycusis (age-induced hearing loss), noise-induced hearing loss, middle ear infections, ear canal perforations, ear wax, blockage and tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

“Hearing loss is the second most common condition next to arthritis in aged people and refers to a diminished ability to hear sounds, including speech,” Mr Wong said.

“It happens when there is a problem with one or more parts of the ear and auditory system, which includes the outer, middle and inner ear, as well as the auditory nerve and the brain centre for hearing (auditory cortex),” He said presbycusis could not be avoided.

“As we age, the small hearing cells in the inner ear (cortiles) wear and tear, and slowly die away. This process results in a natural loss of hearing as we grow older,” he said.

However, noise-induced hearing loss can be avoided.

“Protect your hearing if you are going to be exposed to loud noise and don’t blast loud music into your ears by using headphones or earphones,” he said.

Mr Wong said that as we aged, hearing loss would rise sharply, affecting three out of four Australians over 75.

“Luckily, audiological science has made huge advancements in recent years,” he said.

“Today we can fit hearing aids that cannot be seen when worn. They sit deep in the ear canal, completely out of sight.

“Wireless technology allows communication between multiple microphones.

“This allows hearing aids to focus on and track speech even in background noise.

“The direction of the amplification can be controlled. Sounds can be selectively amplified or not. Background noise can be significantly reduced.”

“Bluetooth technology allows us to even connect hearing aids to everyday devices such as the TV, computer, tablet and smart phone/mobile phone.

Details: 9807 3007 or visit alphahearing.com.au

Audiologist Michael Wongknows ears inside out.

EXPERT ADVICE
SOUNDS GREAT

AUDIOLOGISTS can test if you have a hearing loss.

■ If your hearing is outside of normal limits, an audiologist will be able to determine why, explain and recommend treatments.

■ The audiologist is also the professional who will deliver non-medical treatment options, including the prescription and fitting of hearing aids.

■ Assessments include pure-tone audiometry, speech testing, impedance audiometry (middle ear testing) and otoscopy (checking for ear wax).

■ An audiologist can make custom ear plugs to protect you from the damaging effects of loud sound.

WHO IS AT RISK?

■ Diabetics, smokers and people with cardiovascular disease must be particularly mindful of their hearing.

■ They are twice as likely to have hearing loss compared with the general population.

■ Tradesmen who use power tools and musicians who are exposed to amplified music must use custom ear plugs and hearing protection.

Good Friday Appeal 2016

Thanks to your generosity, the Good Friday Appeal has raised over $1.5 million through donation envelopes. Your contribution helps to provide new equipment and fund vital research projects at The Royal Children’s Hospital that help children like Simone, who has spinal muscular atrophy.

The Herald & Weekly Times started the Good Friday Appeal in 1931. Since then the Appeal has raised more than $291 million to help make the care given to all the young patients at The Royal Children’s Hospital truly exceptional.

Please. Give that they may grow.

You can help by looking out for your donation envelope this Tuesday in the Herald Sun.