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# THE NATIONAL HEARING TEST

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## Media Contacts

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## Quick Facts about the National Hearing Test

**What is it?** The National Hearing Test is a screening test for hearing loss that is self-administered simply and conveniently over the telephone.

**Why is it important?** Approximately 36 million Americans have significant hearing loss, yet as many as half have never had their hearing tested. Untreated hearing loss can lead to a serious decline in your quality of life, causing social isolation, problems on the job, and frequent embarrassment. The National Hearing Test is a simple and scientifically validated screening test. It can be the first step on your path to taking charge of your hearing health.

**Who developed it?** The test was developed through a collaboration between Communication Disorders Technology, Inc., Indiana University, and VU University Medical Center of Amsterdam. The National Telephone Test was developed with the support of the National Institute for Deafness and other Communication Disorders of the National Institutes of Health, under Grant No. 3R43DC009719. The content of this website is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

Communication Disorders Technology, Inc (*CDT*). CDT was formed in 1989 by Charles S. Watson and Diane Kewley-Port, Professors of Speech and Hearing Sciences at Indiana University, and Daniel P. Maki, Professor of Mathematics at Indiana University.

**How does the test work?** You simply call from a landline phone and enter your Access Code to start the test. You listen to three-digit sequences that are spoken with a noise background, and use the keypad to enter what you heard. If you are doing well, the test becomes more difficult, by making it harder to hear the digits. If you are making errors, the test gets easier. This method provides a very accurate assessment of your ability to distinguish spoken words in different levels of background noise. Immediately after the test, you are told the results for each ear, which will help you make an informed decision as to whether you should see an audiologist to have a complete hearing evaluation.

### **How much does it cost?**

The test is \$5. To purchase the test, visit [www.nationalhearingtest.org](http://www.nationalhearingtest.org). We offer individual tests as well as bulk licensing options for businesses and organizations.

**What kind of hearing loss does the test detect?** This hearing screening is very effective at detecting the most common forms of hearing losses, those that are age-related and those that result from exposure to loud noises.

## Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Now Screening Yourself For Hearing Loss Is (Almost) As Easy As Ignoring It**

*Free phone-based screening has helped nearly 40,000 people with  
affordable, accurate, widely available test – aims to reach 100,000 by end of year*

**BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA – October, 2014** – It is no wonder so many of us avoid having our hearing tested, even if we suspect it might need help. We're confused about where to get an unbiased hearing test, who should perform it and how much it will cost. Not to mention the fear that companies will pursue us without mercy, trying to sell us expensive solutions. Who needs the aggravation?

The scientists who developed the National Hearing Test with funding from the National Institutes of Health have simplified the first step to helping you take control of your hearing health. Just pick up your phone.

The not-for-profit, telephone-based National Hearing Test accurately assesses your hearing in ten minutes as normal, slightly below normal or substantially below normal for each ear. It presents a series of digits you identify against a background of noise, much like the way we might experience hearing loss at family dinners, large gatherings and movies.

You can take the test at home, at the office or in any quiet place with a landline phone, and receive the results immediately. There is no sales pitch after the test. If your hearing is below normal, the National Hearing Test will simply suggest you follow up by seeing an audiologist or other certified hearing professional of your choice. That's it.

You don't have to make an appointment or drive anywhere, and you can take the test any time you like by purchasing an access code at [www.nationalhearingtest.org](http://www.nationalhearingtest.org), then calling the toll-free National Hearing Test line at (866) 223-7575. The cost is \$5, to cover the expense of offering the test.

The first test of its kind in the United States, the National Hearing Test overcomes many obstacles preventing people from being screened for hearing loss. It is the country's only convenient, affordable, scientifically validated hearing screening test delivered over a plain old telephone.

“Research shows that early intervention in hearing loss leads to better quality of life and greater success with hearing aids,” said Dr. Charles S. Watson, chief scientist for the test in the United States and

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professor emeritus of speech and hearing sciences at Indiana University, Bloomington. “Consequently, it’s important for anyone who suspects they’ve suffered hearing loss to have their hearing tested and that a low-cost, convenient test be made widely available.”

Dr. Watson stressed, “While the telephone-administered test provides an accurate estimate of a person’s hearing in the speech-frequency range, it is not a substitute for a full hearing evaluation by an audiologist. The screening test is for those who suspect they might have a hearing problem but are not sufficiently convinced to make that appointment. Some callers pass the test and are relieved, while others fail and are advised to seek a full evaluation.”

## **About the National Hearing Test Project**

The National Hearing Test is administered by Bloomington, Indiana-based Communication Disorders Technology, Inc., in partnership with Indiana University and the VU Medical Center of Amsterdam, and with the support of the National Institute for Deafness and Other Communication Disorders of the National Institutes of Health, under Grant No. 3R43DC009719.

Learn more about the National Hearing Test at [www.nationalhearingtest.org](http://www.nationalhearingtest.org). To take the National Hearing Test, obtain a code at that site and call the test line at (866) 223-7575.

## **About Communication Disorders Technology, Inc.**

Founded in 1989 by two speech and hearing researchers and a mathematician at Indiana University, Communication Disorders Technology, Inc., develops software to treat speech, language and hearing disorders. Visit Communications Disorders Technology, Inc., online at [www.comdistec.com](http://www.comdistec.com).

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## Scientists Who Developed the Test

### Charles S. Watson

Principal investigator, development of the U.S. version of the National Hearing Test  
Former chair, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at Indiana University  
Former Director of Research, Boys Town National Research Hospital in Omaha  
President, Communication Disorders Technology, Inc.

### Larry Humes

Distinguished Professor, Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, Indiana University  
Chair, Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, Indiana University

### Gary Kidd

Associate Scientist, Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences, Indiana University  
Senior Scientist, Communication Disorders Technology, Inc.

### James Miller

Principal Scientist, Communication Disorders Technology, Inc.  
Emeritus Director of Research, Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis  
Adjunct Professor, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at Indiana University  
Professor Emeritus, Washington University in St. Louis

### Cas Smits

Professor, Engineering & Biophysics  
VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam  
Originator of digits-in-noise test first used in the Netherlands and later replicated in many countries

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## Current Press Collection

### [Free national hearing test available by phone](#)

Posted June 26, 2014, *Amsterdam News*, New York

### [Over-the-phone hearing test offered free through the end of June](#)

Posted June 24, 2014, *Insight News*, Minneapolis, Minnesota

### [30,000 Americans take National Hearing Test in May; free period extends to last week of June](#)

Posted June 23, 2014, *The Indianapolis Recorder*, Indianapolis, Indiana

### [Do-it-yourself hearing test now available](#)

Posted June 15, 2014 by Dann Denny, *The Herald Times*, Bloomington, Indiana

### [Over-the-phone hearing test offered free in June](#)

Posted June 10, 2014 by Debbie Bock, *The Westlake Bay Village Observer*, Westlake, Ohio

### [Make a free phone call to check your hearing](#)

Posted June 6, 2014, *The St. Louis American*, St. Louis, Missouri

### [National Hearing Test offers free hearing screening from home through June](#)

Posted June 4, 2014 by Rebecca Catalanello, *The Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, Louisiana

### [As we age, hearing loss is common – but quite treatable](#)

Posted June 3, 2014 by Susan Bloom, *The Ashbury Park Press*, Neptune, New Jersey

### [Free phone test screens for hearing loss](#)

Posted June 1, 2014, *Knoxville News Sentential*, Knoxville, Tennessee

### [Hearing test via phone increases awareness](#)

Posted May 31, 2014 by Misti Crane, *The Columbus Dispatch*, Columbus Ohio

### [Audiology Affiliates in Brooklyn Available for Comprehensive Hearing Testing Recommended as Follow-Up to National Hearing Test](#)

Posted May 28, 2014, *Busbyway*

### [Hearing test? Call it in](#)

Posted May 28, 2014, *Jacksonville Daily News*, Jacksonville, North Carolina

### [May is National Better Speech and Hearing Month](#)

Posted May 22, 2014 by Scott Wegenast, *AARP Kentucky*

### [Listen up: This hotline can check your hearing](#)

Posted May 20, 2014 by Darla Carter, *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, Kentucky

### [Free hearing test available by telephone](#)

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Posted May 20, 2014, by Barb Berggoetz, *The Indianapolis Star*, Indianapolis, Indiana

[How's your hearing? Find out with free hearing test over the phone](#)

Posted May 17, 2014 by Angela Townsend, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio

[Free Hearing Screenings During Better Speech and Hearing Month](#)

Posted May 17, 2014 b, *KCDHH* by Kim Brannock (The Kentucky Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), surfky.com, Frankfort, Kentucky

[Take this hearing test right now. I did, and the results were disturbing](#)

Posted May 16, 2014 by Lenny Bernstein, *The Washington Post*, Washington DC

[Telephone hearing test offered](#)

Posted May 16, 2014, *News and Tribune*, Clark County, Indiana

[Giving help, getting help, May 16](#)

Posted May 16, 2014, The State, Columbia, South Carolina

[Free over-the-phone hearing test in May, part of Better Speech and Hearing Month](#)

Posted May 14, 2014, *KCDHH* (The Kentucky Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), kyforward.com, Frankfort, Kentucky

[What? A hearing test you can take on the phone?](#)

Posted May 14, 2014 by Barbara Peters Smith, *Herald Tribune*, Sarasota, Florida

[A new hearing test available over the phone is free for month of May](#)

Posted May 14, 2014 by Michele Munz, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, St. Louis, Missouri

[Health Notes: Nemours, St. Vincent's named to list of '150 Great Places to Work in Healthcare'](#)

Posted May 13, 2014, *The Florida Times-Union*, Jacksonville, Florida

[How's your hearing? Take this free test over the phone to find out](#)

Posted May 5, 2014 by Katy Muldoon, *The Oregonian*, Portland, Oregon

[Charlotte agency offers low-cost hearing aids for low-income clients](#)

Posted May 5, 2014 by Karen Garloch, *Charlotte Observer*, Charlotte, North Carolina

[Say What? Free Do-It-Yourself Hearing Test Available by Phone](#)

Posted May 5, 2014 by Kathleen O'Brien, *The Star-Ledger*, New Jersey

[Free Hearing Test This Month](#)

Posted May 4, 2014 by Stephanie Innes, *Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson, Arizona

[Great Day Live: "National Hearing Tests's Telephone Screenings"](#)

Aired April 22, 2014, on WHAS 11 in Louisville Kentucky