



Canadian HARD of HEARING Association

(CHHA-Hamilton)

HERE, HEAR!! Newsletter

www.chha-hamilton.ca

Rob Diehl, President

May, 2013

Ménière's disease

(pron.: /meɪn'jɛərz/)[1] is a disorder of the inner ear that can affect hearing and balance to a varying degree. It is characterized by episodes of vertigo, low-pitched tinnitus, and hearing loss. The hearing loss is fluctuating rather than permanent, meaning that it comes and goes, alternating between ears for some time, then becomes permanent with no return to normal function.

It is named after the French physician Prosper Ménière, who, in an article published in 1861, first reported that vertigo was caused by inner ear disorders. The condition affects people differently; it can range in intensity from being a mild annoyance to a lifelong disability.

Meniere's disease affects up to 5 million people in the United States, with approximately 100,000 new cases diagnosed annually. It's relatively rare, but has been rumored to affect people including Alan B. Shepard, the first U.S. astronaut, as well as Marilyn Monroe, Martin Luther King Jr., and Charles Darwin, who each exhibited symptoms typical of the condition.

The exact cause of Meniere's disease is idiopathic . . . a bit of a mystery.

Alt-country / rock singer-songwriter —The Mysterious Disease That Almost Ended **Ryan Adams'** Career is on page seven.

MAY *Educational Workshop*

MENIERE'S DISEASE **UPDATE**

Speaker: Dr. Diane Reid, ENT

Date: Wednesday, May 15th

Time: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Location: South Gate Presbyterian Church, 120 Clarendon Avenue, Hamilton L9A 3A5

Registration & Contact info:
905-575-4964 or
chha-hamilton.newsletter@shaw.ca

Charge: * Members - no charge
* Guests - \$5.00 donation
* Seating is limited.

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President's Message

Telling our Story – The Importance of Community

Spring is in the air and that can only mean one thing, the CHHA Annual National Conference is just around the corner. This year will be my first experience attending this conference and I'm overwhelmed at the idea of so many hard of hearing individuals from across Canada coming together in one place. To me, this is the essence of community; a group of people with a common characteristic and passion coming together in one place to discuss the issues that come with being hard of hearing as well as celebrating our accomplishments.

This concept of community is so important for a group like CHHA. Like many people who suffer from hearing loss I remember the feeling of being isolated and alone. I quickly found myself as an 18 year old surrounded by peers who had no idea what I was going through and I felt like I couldn't relate to anyone. I found CHHA several years later as a young adult and I quickly found comfort among people who shared the same struggles, concerns and accomplishments that I had; I found my community! I hope that all of you also find this sense of community within CHHA-Hamilton. We are here for you, our members, to work together and share all of the pains and joys in our lives as hard of hearing individuals.

I invite you all to join us at a fundraiser BBQ on May 4 and 5 at St. Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre located at 826 Hwy 24 W in St. Williams, Ontario. Our BBQ will be a part of their Spring Sale where they will be selling source-identified native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses, allowing you to support CHHA-Hamilton and get a jump start on your Spring gardening needs!

If you are interested in volunteering to staff the BBQ please contact us at info@chha-hamilton.ca or call 905-575-4964 and let us know what days and times you are available to help. We can also provide assistance with carpool transportation.

In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it" – Author, Marianne Williamson

Rob Diehl

CHHA – Hamilton - President

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Ask Cathy . . .

Q: My hearing professional says I need to change from an ITE (In The Ear hearing aid) to a BTE (Behind The Ear hearing aid). I'm very reluctant to change. What do you think?

A:

Going from wearing a hearing aid that is one piece and fits all in your ear to a hearing aid that is two pieces – one that fits behind your ear connected by a tube to a mold that fits in your ear can be a little upsetting. The main reason this was probably recommended is that you have had a change in your hearing loss. The BTE style of hearing aid can be used on more severe losses because the microphone and the receiver can be placed further apart to prevent feedback from the higher volume needed due to the increased hearing loss.

The biggest advantage of switching to this aid is that you will hear better. There are some other advantages as well – because the electronic part does not come into contact with ear wax it needs less repairs than all-in-the-ear hearing aids. Another advantage is when your hearing aid does need repair your clinic can give you a loaner because the custom made part of a behind the ear hearing aid contains no electronics.

Today's digital BTEs are smaller than ever and come in lots of different **colours** – so you can match the colour of your hair or your skin colour- for the truly adventuresome you can get a BTE in zebra stripes, or like me in bright **red**.

A BTE can also easily accommodate an FM system which lets you hear even better.

One disadvantage of the BTE is that it is initially harder to figure out how to get it on right- but with a little practice and patience it will become second nature- even those who wear glasses can wear a BTE – you just have to put the hearing aid on first and the glasses on second.

Also, a BTE usually comes with a bigger battery than an in-the-ear hearing aid so the batteries last longer – which is a big plus.

The switch from an ITE to a BTE is not easy but the ability to hear better makes it all worth while.

Cathy not only wears hearing aids herself, she is also the retired general manager of Connect Hearing (formerly Provincial Hearing Consultants).

Send questions to Ask Cathy to:
chha-hamilton.newsletter@shaw.ca

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Come Visit our Hamilton Locations:

Hamilton (Main): 16B-550 Fennell Ave. E

Hamilton (West): 723 Rymal Road W. Unit 500

DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
SUFFER FROM CONSTANT
“RINGING IN THE EARS?”



TINNITUS (“TIN-A-TUS” OR “TIN-EYE-TUS”)

is the medical term for the sensation of hearing sound
in your ears or head when no external sound is present.

QUICK TINNITUS FACTS

- Tinnitus is the #1 disability for military veterans
- Tinnitus can occur at any age, and may begin suddenly or progress gradually
- The most common causes of tinnitus are:
 - Aging
 - Head injury
 - Side effects from medication
 - Noise exposure (e.g., from shooting or machines at work)



INTRODUCING **Xino** TINNITUS

Starkey, a global leader in hearing health technology,
has engineered a new Tinnitus Treatment Solution
designed to forever change the way people deal with
ringing in the ears.

Xino Tinnitus is a small and comfortable in-ear device
designed to deliver all day relief from tinnitus.

www.starkeycanada.ca

Contact a licensed hearing clinic for assistance.



New technologies offering hope for those with tinnitus - or ringing in the ears

(BPT) - If you experience a constant ringing in your ears that's bothersome at best and debilitating at worst, you are far from alone. Tinnitus affects roughly one in five Americans and about 16 million people have serious tinnitus that requires medical attention. It's also the most common disability for military veterans, since it can be caused by extended exposure to loud noise.

While tinnitus is a common condition, it's one that can affect each person differently. While the general description involves a ringing in the ears audible only to the person with tinnitus, sufferers also report hearing a hissing, buzzing, whistling, roaring or chirping sound. It also varies in severity – merely an unwelcome distraction for some but completely debilitating for others.

Those who have tinnitus often report trouble sleeping, an inability to concentrate or complete tasks and changes in cognitive ability. If left untreated, tinnitus can lead to extreme stress for sufferers, and can present challenges both at work and at home.

No cure, but treatment available

Tinnitus is often related to hearing loss, although it can also be associated with ear-wax, head injuries, medications and other conditions. Much like hearing loss, there's no known cure for tinnitus, but there are treatments available.

Counseling and sound therapy are often used to provide relief for those with tinnitus, and the hearing aid industry has also recently developed products that can help alleviate the problems caused by tinnitus. For example, Xino Tinnitus from Starkey is an innovative, nearly invisible, behind-the-ear device that provides relief for tinnitus sufferers.

The device has adjustable features designed to allow the wearer to experience a maximum level of relief, including volume and memory controls that can be controlled with the touch of a finger. The device can help offset the irritating sounds and thus many of the problems caused by tinnitus. This device can also be used as a hearing aid for tinnitus sufferers who also have a hearing loss and could benefit from amplification.

More information can be found at www.starkey.com.

What to do if you think you have tinnitus

Tinnitus is a condition that can often be treated by a hearing care professional, although certain conditions might require medical treatment from a physician or ENT. A specialist can help you develop a treatment plan and determine if a tinnitus treatment device can help alleviate your symptoms.

If you're suffering from tinnitus, the time to get help is now. While there is no cure for tinnitus, the right treatment methods can help you manage your condition and prevent it from reaching a debilitating level. Visit www.tinnitushearing.com to learn more about this condition and find a hearing care professional near you.

From CHHA National's I Listen
By (BPT) March 13, 2013

Do you enjoy Music?

The SMART Lab at Ryerson University (in Toronto, ON) is currently recruiting adults with hearing loss to take part in a research study aimed at improving the quality of music listening through hearing aids. For more information, please visit www.chha.ca/documents/Ryerson.pdf



Did you know...

In our community many people who are unable to hear clearly, even with hearing aids, have never been made aware that they are eligible for an important tax credit that often includes a significant refund. It's time Hamiltonians learned about their legitimate entitlement under the Income Tax Act.

The Disability Tax Credit is a non-refundable credit up to \$1,400 per year. If you are eligible, this claim can be made retroactively for up to ten years!

For more information please contact:

Hamilton Mountain - Chris Charlton, MP - 905.574.3331

Hamilton Centre - David Christopherson, MP - 905.526.0770

Hamilton East Stoney-Creek - Wayne Marston, MP - 905-662.4763



Chris Charlton

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Member of Parliament for Hamilton East - Stoney Creek
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The Mysterious Disease That Almost Ended Ryan Adams' Career

Two years ago, the alt rocker took a step back from music to deal with a debilitating inner ear condition called Meniere's disease. Here, how he fought his way back to the stage and the studio.

By Allison Takeda

Alt-rock singer/songwriter Ryan Adams, whose new album, *Ashes and Fire*, debuted earlier this month, is one of the most famously prolific musicians of the last decade. Starting with his first solo record in 2000, Adams, 36, has released almost one album a year — and no fewer than three in 2005.

Then, in 2009, the rocker announced suddenly that he was quitting his band, the Cardinals, and “taking a step back from music.” The reason? Meniere's disease, a mysterious and debilitating inner ear condition that causes vertigo and hearing loss, among other symptoms.

Adams' fans were disappointed, to say the least — but no one was more upset than the man himself. “I was really emotional, and I was in a lot of pain,” he told *Us Weekly* of his two-year hiatus. “I was becoming more and more ill, and I was hearing people less and less. I didn't know if I was able to do what I do anymore. I thought, ‘Maybe this is done, maybe I just need to walk away.’”

Partly because there isn't a definitive cause for Meniere's disease, there's also no definitive diagnostic test. Your doctor may first order an MRI or CT scan to rule out other conditions such as multiple sclerosis or a brain tumor, then ask you questions about your sensory problems and evaluate your inner ear function using a hearing test and a balance test. Red flags generally include multiple spontaneous episodes of vertigo, each lasting 20 minutes or longer; hearing loss; and a sense of aural fullness or tinnitus, described by the American Tinnitus

Association as a “ringing in the ears or perception of sound where there is no external source.” Depending on the severity of your case, the perceived sound can range from intermittent and subtle to constant and shattering.

.In Adams' case, it was the latter. “It was an overwhelming noise that never stopped in my left ear,” he said in the interview with *Us Weekly*. “On a good day, it sounded like the wind was howling and there was a siren. On a bad day, it sounded like I was standing in front of a jet engine.”

Adams' tinnitus actually started a few years before he was diagnosed with Meniere's disease, so it's possible that it was caused originally by something else (such as exposure to loud noise or an ear infection) and then became worsened by the Meniere's. What he did know was that he couldn't go on living the way he had been.

Adams started losing sleep, feeling nauseated, having balance problems, and experiencing severe bouts of stage fright — a serious problem for someone who makes his living performing music for hundreds, sometimes thousands of people a night. “Having to play was like having a panic attack, and the panic attack would make me have a Meniere episode, and the Meniere episode would make me forget a lyric or feel like I was going to fall down on stage,” he said.

How Ryan Adams Got His Groove Back

Unfortunately for Adams and the millions of other Americans with Meniere's disease, there is no cure. Long-term damage is irreversible and difficult to prevent, but some treatments help manage a person's daily discomfort.

In some instances, doctors may prescribe motion-sickness medications or anti-nausea pills to lessen the severity of an attack. They may also consider diuretics, which reduce the amount of fluid your body retains and can help regulate volume and pressure in your inner ear. Adams, for his part, has taken a more natural route. He credits yoga, acupuncture, better nutrition, and hypnotherapy with helping him to rise above his Meniere's disease symptoms and get back into music. He says now that he has trained himself to not even hear his tinnitus and that he gave up smoking and coffee.

Whatever he's doing is working. *Ashes and Fire* has been well received by critics.

It seems he's found his balance!

WHY JOIN CHHA?

- We offer speech reading classes to assist you in communicating
- We are advocates for those who suffer from hearing loss
- We host events that help build community amongst hard of hearing individuals
- We raise funds to assist the hard of hearing in our region

All of these projects help us to fulfill CHHA's mission to make the community a better place for the hard of hearing. Please renew your membership or join us for the first time and find out what CHHA is all about.

To keep our association strong we have to know that *you* are supporting us by becoming a member.

Ruth Watt, Membership Chair

CHHA-Hamilton Membership Application & Renewal Form

Your Membership is due effective now to – August 31, 2014

Please mail this form with your payment to:

CHHA Membership, 762 Upper James, Suite 122 Hamilton, ON L9C 3A2

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ e-mail: _____

Age: 19—30 ___ 31—50 ___ 51+ ___

I hereby apply for one of the following memberships (please check one):

Individual Membership: \$30.00 / year Family Membership: \$50.00 / year

Lifetime Membership: \$300.00 plus \$5.00 / year

Make cheques payable to: CHHA-Hamilton

Donations to CHHA-Hamilton may be made in memory of loved ones and friends. Tax receipts will be issued and announcements sent to the family. Charitable Reg. No. 89647 8419 RR0001