



HEARING LOSS AND NOISE

FACT SHEET 51-001-0713

WHAT is hearing loss from noise?

- Hearing loss is the inability to hear some or all sounds in one or both ears
- Hearing loss from noise (noise-induced) often affects ability to hear high pitches
- Hearing loss from noise can affect your ability to hear on or off the job
- The first clues of a noise-induced hearing loss may be:
 - turning up the TV volume
 - asking family members to repeat what was said
 - complaining that people are mumbling or “don’t speak clearly”
 - having difficulty understanding conversations with a lot of background noise
 - sounds or voices seem muffled

WHEN and WHERE can noise damage your hearing?

- At work, home and at play
- Anytime noise is present and you have to raise your voice to be heard at 3 feet away
- At 85 decibels (dBA) or more for continuous noise and 140 dBP or more for impulse or impact noise
- The severity of the noise hazard is affected by the duration and intensity of the noise

WHY protect your hearing?

- Noise-induced hearing loss is not treatable with medication
- Loud noise can cause ringing in your ears and increase stress and fatigue
- Impaired hearing can cause serious or fatal mistakes in combat and at work through the loss of sound cues or situational awareness
- One-time unprotected noise exposure to very loud sounds (such as weapons fire) can cause permanent hearing loss

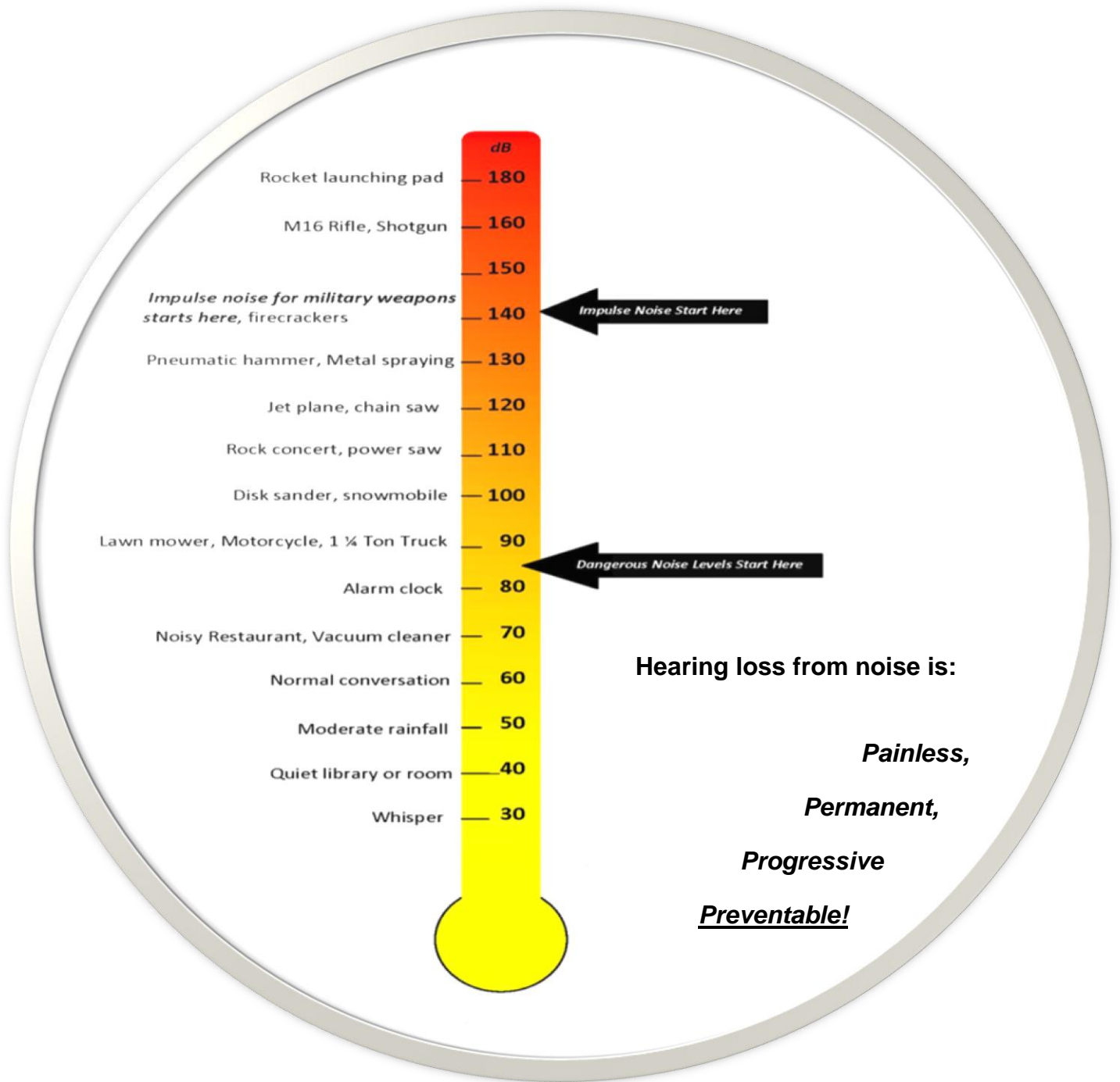
HOW can you protect your hearing?

- Keep enclosures built around noisy equipment in good repair and keep access panels closed during use
- Use properly fitted and maintained hearing protection (i.e. approved ear plugs, ear muffs, Tactical Communications and Protective Systems (TCAPS) or helmets)
- Cotton, tissues and fingers are not good hearing protectors!
- If you are about to start a noisy task, let those nearby know so they can either leave the area or use hearing protection
- If you can control the volume, TURN IT DOWN!

WHO can help?

- YOU, by wearing your hearing protection and following safe listening practices
- Your Army Hearing Program Officer by providing hearing protective devices, hearing loss prevention training and education, and hearing testing for Soldiers and Civilian workers
- The Army Hearing Program, U.S. Army Public Health Command, by maximizing Soldier and Civilian hearing and communication abilities through hearing readiness, operational and clinical hearing services, and hearing conservation, contributing to survivability, lethality and mission effectiveness

Army Hearing Program
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Additional information on hearing loss from noise can be found at:

Army Hearing Program (<http://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/workplacehealth/hrc/Pages/default.aspx>)

American Academy of Audiology (<http://www.audiology.org/Pages/default.aspx>)

American Speech Language Hearing Association (<http://www.asha.org/>)

National Hearing Conservation Association (<http://hearingconservation.org/>)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise/>)