



HEARING HEALTH & LOSS PREVENTION STUDY

What patients hear today impacts how they hear tomorrow.



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WHAT PEOPLE AREN'T HEARING

While it's no secret that hearing health is a concern for many people, few actually pursue preventative care by visiting an audiologist. Often, consumers don't visit an audiology office until they experience symptoms of hearing loss, and by then the damage can be significant.

The Synchrony Hearing Health & Loss Prevention Study revealed that many consumers simply don't consider audiology care a normal part of their routine healthcare, and fail to see its value and understand the impact of hearing loss.

In fact, despite an increase in hearing loss diagnoses in young adults, these generations are more likely to view hearing loss as a "later problem."

With this research, Synchrony provides a new depth of understanding. The study helped uncover why people of all ages don't pursue preventative hearing care and provides key insights into what could motivate them to do more.

Let's dive in.

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SECTION 1

GENERATIONAL PERCEPTIONS OF HEARING LOSS

Consumers say their hearing is a priority, but their actions tell a different story. Young adults (Millennials and Gen Z) show a lack of urgency to protect their hearing health. Some contributing factors include hearing loss denial and an incorrect view that it's a "later problem."

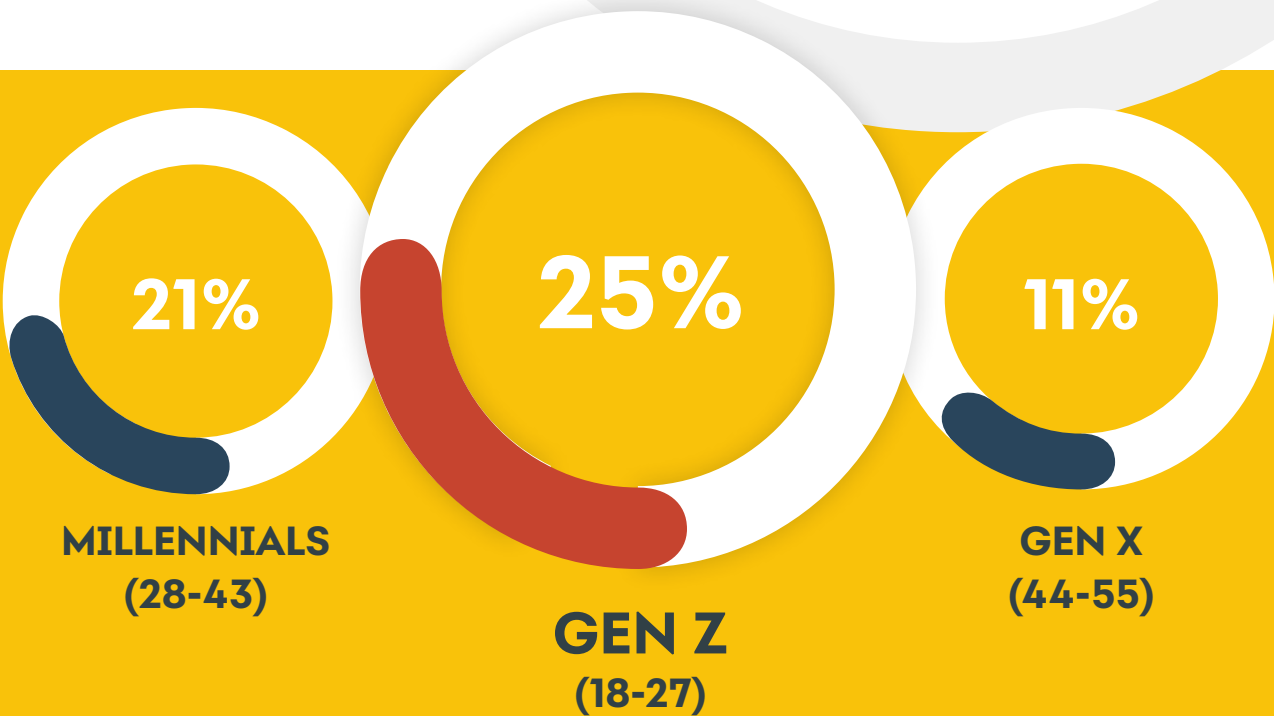
SEE THE RESEARCH →

62%
OF GEN Z EXPERIENCED
A SYMPTOM OF HEARING
LOSS IN THE PAST
6 MONTHS

YOUNG ADULTS ARE IN DENIAL

69% of audiologists agree that young adults are not aware of the long-term impact of their behavior on hearing health, and 54% agree that they are seeing more young adults with hearing impairments than before. And while young adults acknowledge what may have contributed to their hearing impairment, they are hesitant to take action to protect their hearing.

40% of young adults under 30 have some level of hearing loss



Generational Differences – % agree

“Hearing impairment only affects older people.”

Gen Z spends more than double the average time wearing headphones



SECTION 2

ATTITUDES TOWARD PREVENTATIVE CARE

Consumers don't consider preventative hearing care a "normal" part of routine healthcare, even when they have concerns. While many people visit other healthcare providers on a yearly basis for preventative checkups, audiology visits are typically pursued only when hearing loss needs to be corrected.

PATIENTS
EXPERIENCE SYMPTOMS
FOR AN AVERAGE OF

2.5 YEARS

BEFORE CONSULTING
AN AUDIOLOGIST

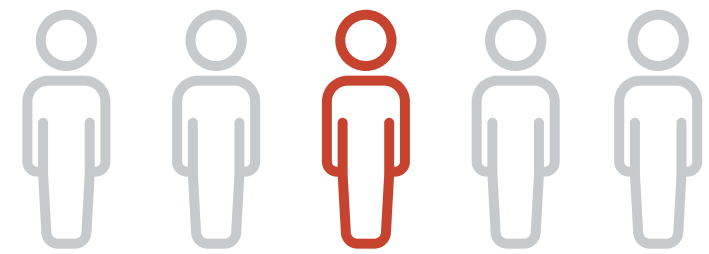
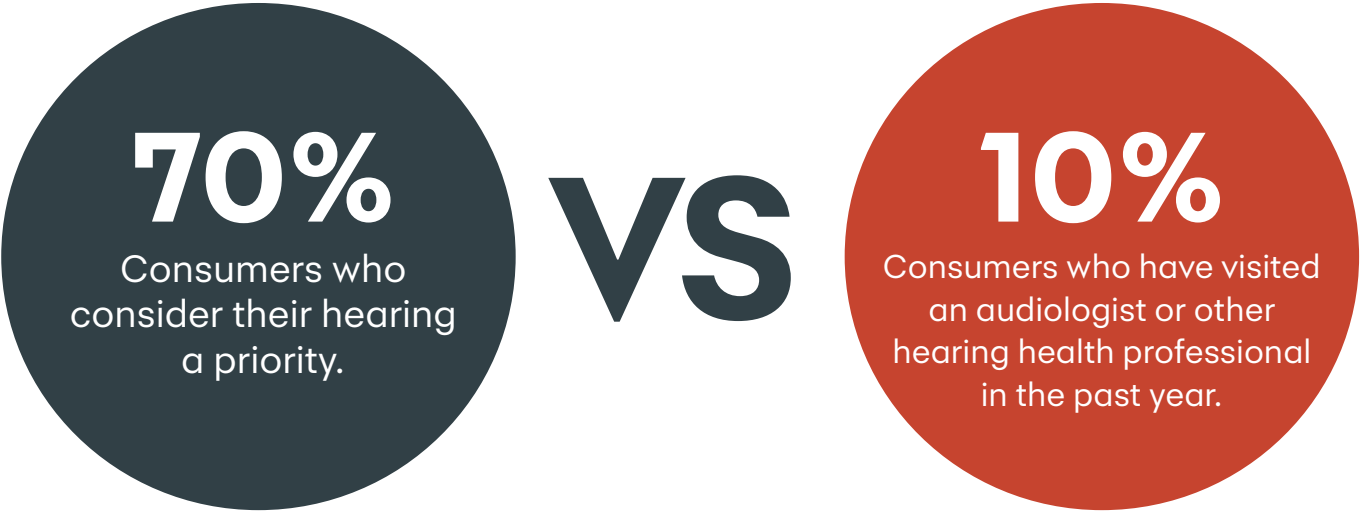
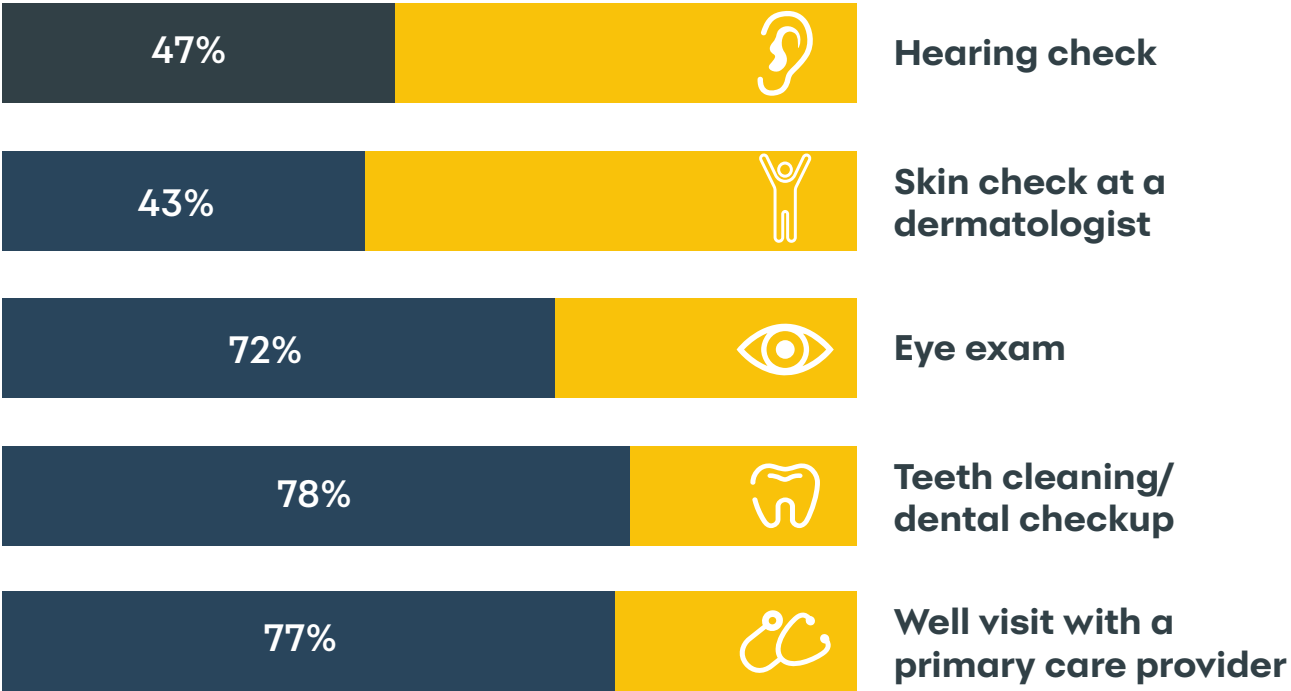
SEE THE RESEARCH



CONSUMERS FEEL NO URGENCY TO PRESERVE THEIR HEARING HEALTH

While most consumers agree they are willing to change their behavior to preserve their hearing, regular checkups with a hearing specialist ranked low out of steps they are likely to take.

Percentage who said it's important to do the following regularly



1 in 5 consumers admitted to exhibiting potential symptoms of hearing loss.



ONLY 53%
of consumers say they would be likely to have regular checkups with a hearing specialist in order to preserve their hearing.

SECTION 3

CHALLENGES IN NORMALIZING AUDIOLOGY CARE

While many consumers recognize the importance of hearing health, there are factors that keep them from pursuing care. Some don't feel the need to consult a specialist, while others simply lack awareness.

61%

OF THOSE WHO DON'T
FEEL THE NEED TO TAKE
ACTION SAID IT'S BECAUSE
THEY HAVE NO CONCERN
ABOUT THEIR HEARING

SEE THE RESEARCH



TOP REASONS WHY CONSUMERS DON'T GET THEIR HEARING CHECKED

Hesitancy to consult a hearing specialist

"I am hesitant about consulting a hearing specialist about hearing loss."

MILLENNIALS
27%
AGREE

GEN Z
30%
AGREE

Lack awareness of accessibility and preservation

14%

of consumers have taken an online hearing test.

89%

of consumers were not aware of online hearing tests before taking this survey.

Stigma around hearing loss and hearing devices

Consumers who say they would wear a hearing device if it's necessary:

6 IN 10

people who wear hearing devices **are embarrassed to be seen wearing them** and would prefer not to wear them.

ONLY
23%



SECTION 4

REINFORCING THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING HEALTH

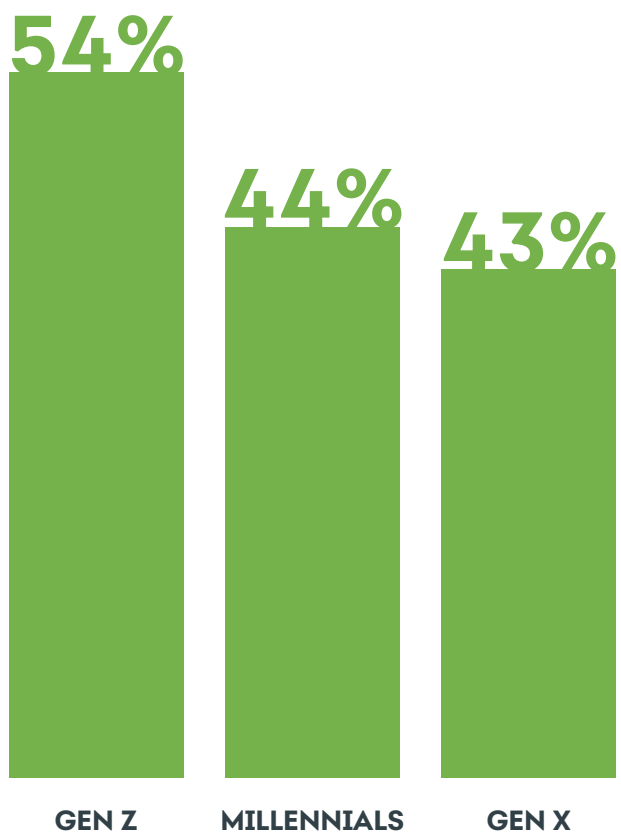
Many consumers aren't aware of the social impacts hearing loss can have on their health. Making young adults aware of the emotional impact of hearing loss could motivate them to take preventative measures.

SEE THE RESEARCH →

50%
**OF AUDIOLOGISTS SAID
WHEN THEY SEE YOUNG
ADULTS, THEIR HEARING
IS ALREADY IMPAIRED.**

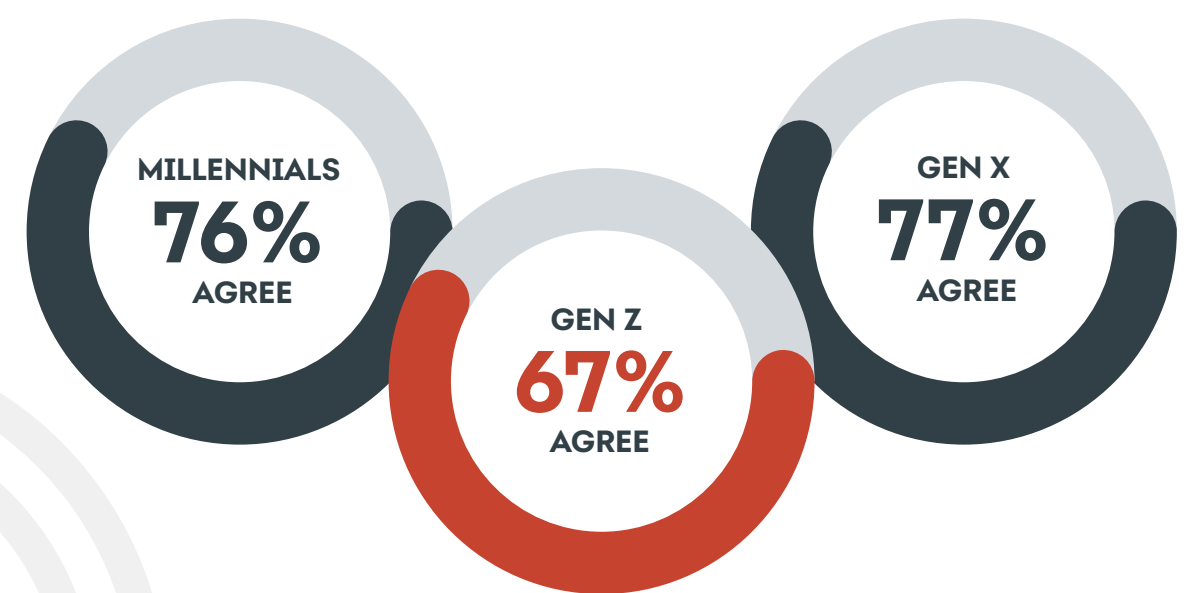
ONCE PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF THE REALITY OF HEARING LOSS, THEY SEEK CARE

One of the main motivators for seeking audiology care is noticing symptoms of hearing loss. However, many consumers don't pursue regular hearing exams. Despite this, Gen Z and Millennials are more likely to say having their hearing checked is important — and have done so in the past year.

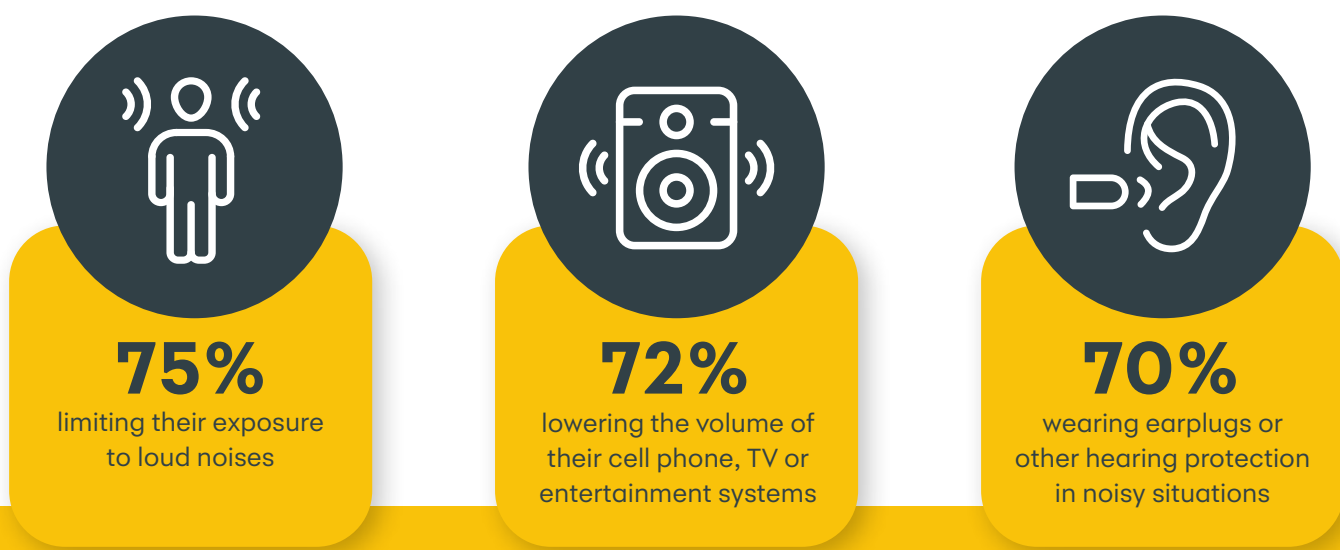


Percentage who said having their hearing checked regularly is extremely/very important

BUT, Gen Z is **less likely to agree** to change their behaviors even if it will preserve their hearing



3 out of 4 consumers are willing to change behaviors to preserve their hearing by taking steps such as:



Knowing the connection between hearing loss and dementia is a catalyst

Few consumers are aware of the connection between hearing loss and their health later in life. When they learn of the impact, it influences their decision to get their hearing checked.

71%
were not aware of the connection between hearing loss and the development of dementia.

53%
said they are more likely to get their hearing checked after taking this survey.

49%

say knowing about the link between hearing loss and dementia affects their decision to get their hearing checked.

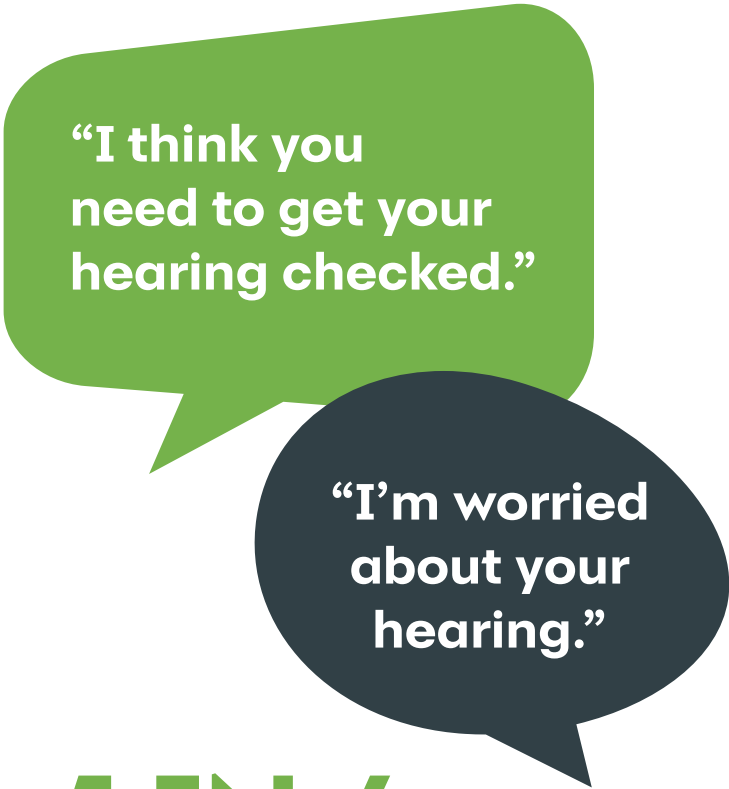


Motivators for younger consumers

Once consumers notice their hearing is getting worse, they're more likely to seek care. Primary care doctors are the top providers consumers discuss or would discuss hearing with, and more often than not the patient initiates the conversation.

The concern of a loved one

Millennials and Gen X are more likely to initiate conversations themselves, while Gen Z said a spouse or loved one did so.



1 IN 4

consumers said they would be motivated to get their hearing checked if a loved one recommended it.

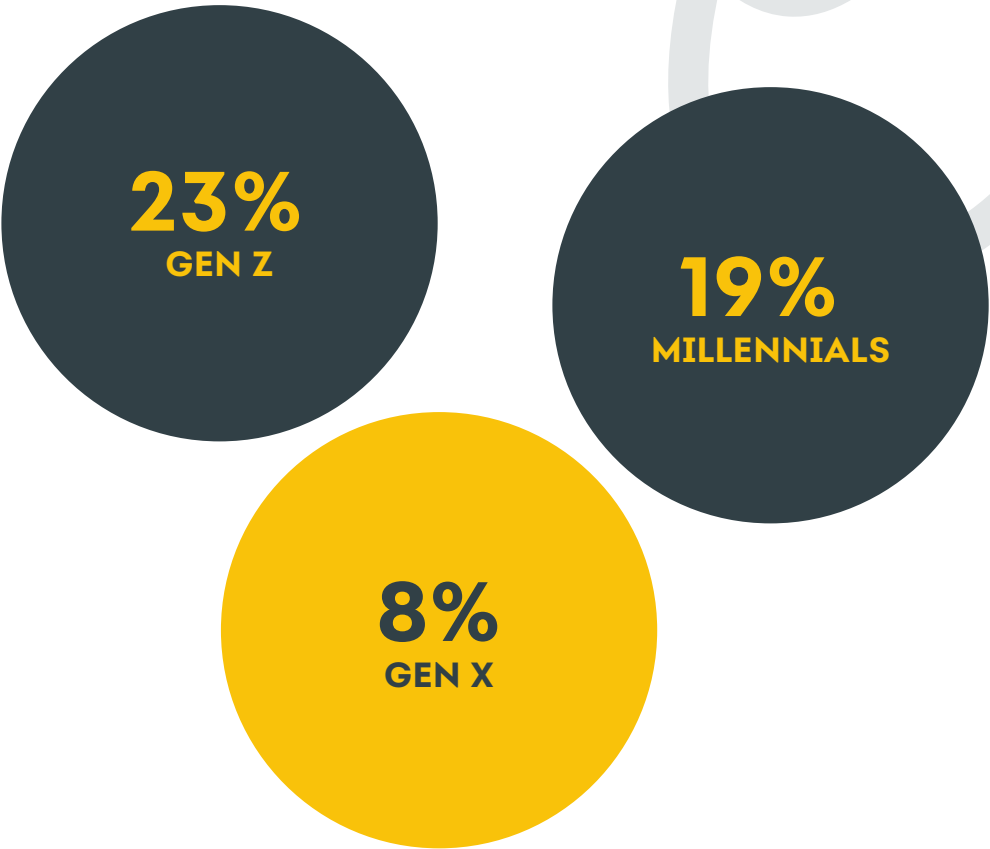
(Among those who have never discussed hearing with an HCP)

Easily accessible free hearing tests

Making hearing tests available online at no cost can help lower barriers and drive more consumers to seek audiology care.

56% of consumers said they were more likely to take a hearing test online than in-person.

Likelihood to have taken an online hearing test:



SECTION 5

ROLE OF FINANCING IN THE ACCEPTANCE OF CARE

With rising costs and lack of accessibility, consumers can struggle to manage audiology care expenses.

SEE THE RESEARCH →

35%

SAID A LOWER COST
WOULD INCREASE THE
LIKELIHOOD THEY WOULD
CONSIDER WEARING A
HEARING DEVICE

NOT ALL PEOPLE ARE PREPARED FOR THE COST

At the end of the day, cost often poses a barrier that makes it hard for consumers to prioritize hearing care over other expenses. This is why it's important to make them aware of options that can help them.

77%

of audiologists believe that **insurance, cost and access issues** are why adults (ages 18-55) do not get a hearing consultation or evaluation.

43%

of consumers who have never discussed hearing with a healthcare provider said that they would be motivated to get their hearing checked **if it was free.**

34%

of hearing-impaired patients who do not have a hearing device **cite expense as a reason they won't consider getting one** even if their hearing gets worse.

Financing options could help patients obtain hearing devices

Flexible financing could help hearing-impaired patients consider wearing a hearing device and even help them purchase a better one.

58%

of consumers who are hearing-impaired but do not use a device like the idea of being able to finance the cost of one.

Average out-of-pocket cost for hearing devices: **more than \$400**



SECTION 6

ACTIONABLE TAKEAWAYS

SEE THE TAKEAWAYS →

As an audiology provider, you have the power to help spread awareness to consumers about the importance of hearing health, but you don't have to do it alone. We're here to help you by providing insights and resources to help you take action.

86%
**OF PEOPLE WHO
HAVE HEARING DEVICES
WISH THEY HAD GOTTEN
THEM SOONER**



HOW TO REACH POTENTIAL PATIENTS

Getting young people into the office isn't an easy feat, but it is an important part of their healthcare. Understanding how the next generation of patients feels about audiology care can help you connect with and educate them.

TAKEAWAY

Younger patients aren't in your office—but their loved ones might be.

ACTION

The best advocates for young people are their family and friends, so encourage your current patients to start a dialogue about the impact hearing loss has had on their lives.



TAKEAWAY

Young adults are not likely to change behaviors to protect their hearing.

ACTION

Once consumers are aware, they're likely to act. Help motivate patients by sharing the social and emotional impact hearing loss can have on their life on your social media.



TAKEAWAY

Consumers who took this survey said they were more likely to get their hearing checked.

ACTION

Simply making patients aware can help drive behavioral change. Use CareCredit marketing materials to help you get the message out through your current patients.



TAKEAWAY

Patients care about their long-term emotional and physical well-being.

ACTION

When younger patients do come to your office, share the ASHA screening recommendations so they will know the best way to preserve and maintain their hearing health.



HERE TODAY TO HELP MORE PEOPLE HEAR TOMORROW

Hearing is essential to how we experience the world. When hearing is lost, so is our connection to the things we love to hear. Which is why we’ve taken the time to analyze the research and deliver a strategy to help you engage with patients of all ages.



Help your patients hear you.

Synchrony and CareCredit are launching a campaign to help bridge the gap between audiologists and young adults through awareness and advocacy. Get access to materials and resources to help support the conversation.

Coming Soon!



SECTION 7

METHODOLOGY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Synchrony Hearing Health & Loss Prevention study was performed by Savanta and GCI Health on behalf of Synchrony. The information was gathered via two online surveys sent to both consumers and audiology professionals in February 2024. Here’s a quick look at who participated.

CONSUMERS

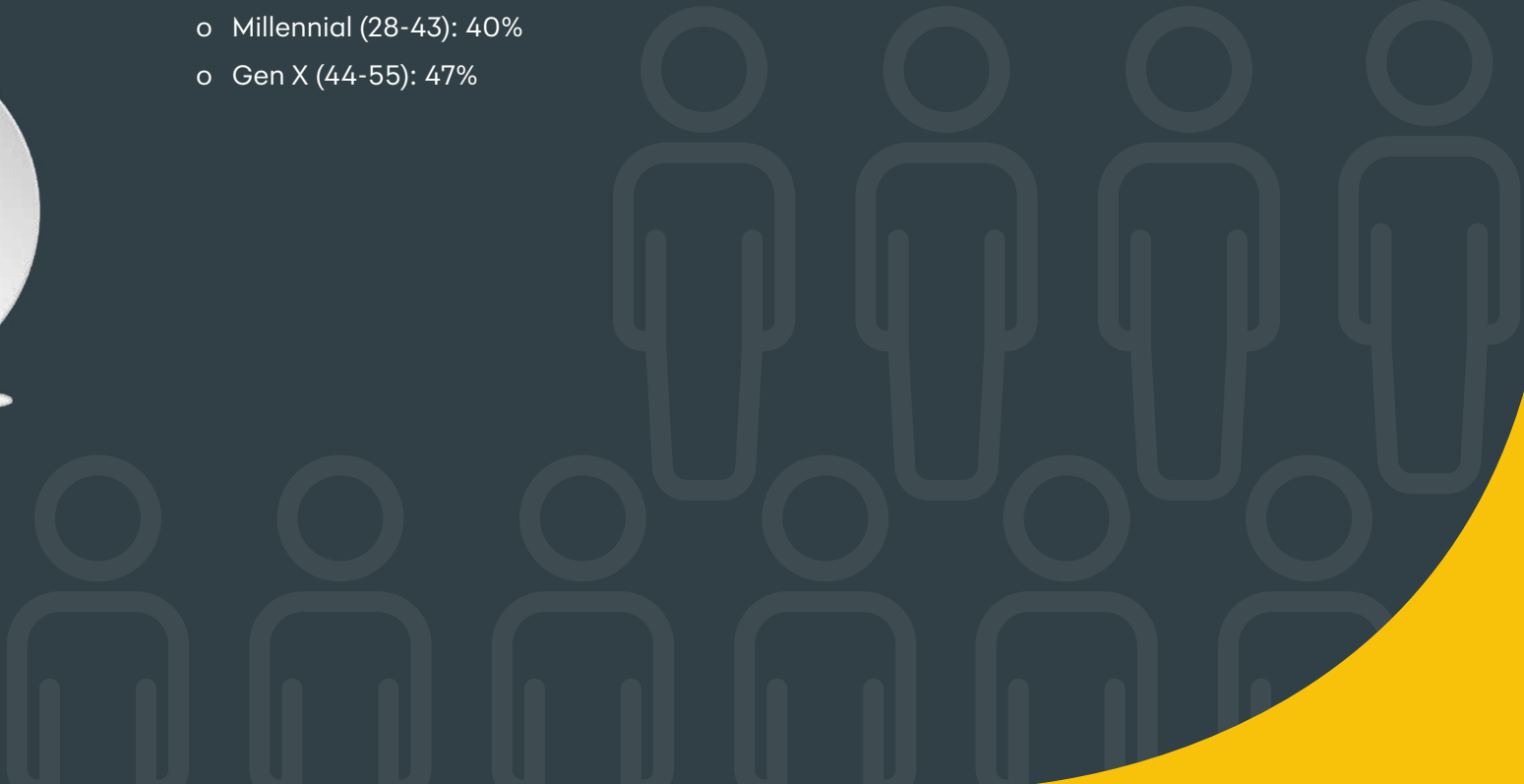
Average time for online survey: 12 minutes

- 2,001 U.S. consumers
- Ages: 18-55
 - Gen Z (18-27): 13%
 - Millennial (28-43): 40%
 - Gen X (44-55): 47%

AUDIOLOGISTS

Average time for online survey: 20 minutes

- 26 U.S. Audiologists
- In practice for 2-40 years





**Looking for more information
or have questions?**

Contact Michelle Romero
VP Network Research and Insights
michelle.romero@syf.com

Contact Amar Malik
Partnerships & New Business
amalik@carecredit.com