

**Mayo Clinic Minute: How hearing issues may affect brain health**

<b>Video</b>	<b>Audio</b>
	Age-related hearing loss may be linked to an increased risk of cognitive decline. And according to two large studies, ...
<b>Ronald Petersen, M.D., Ph.D.</b> <b>Neurology</b> <b>Mayo Clinic</b>	"... individuals who have a degree of hearing loss even in midlife have an increased risk of developing dementia later in life."
	Dr. Ronald Petersen, a Mayo Clinic neurologist, says the exact reason why is not known.
	"It could be that there are actually effects on the brain. Some studies have been shown that if people have a hearing loss over many years, certain parts of the brain, in particular the temporal lobe involved in hearing, but also involved in language and memory, may actually be smaller."
	It also could be that hearing loss leads to social isolation, which can lead to an increased risk in dementia.
	Dr. Petersen recommends getting your hearing assessed every two to three years, especially if you're noticing signs that your hearing may be deteriorating. The fix could be as simple as needing to get earwax removed. However, ...
	"... if in fact a hearing loss is detected that is more than what we would expect for aging, you could get a hearing device — a hearing aid or cochlear implant."
	"We think that if a person improves one's ability to hear, that their cognitive loss — if it's related to that — might in fact slow over time."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.