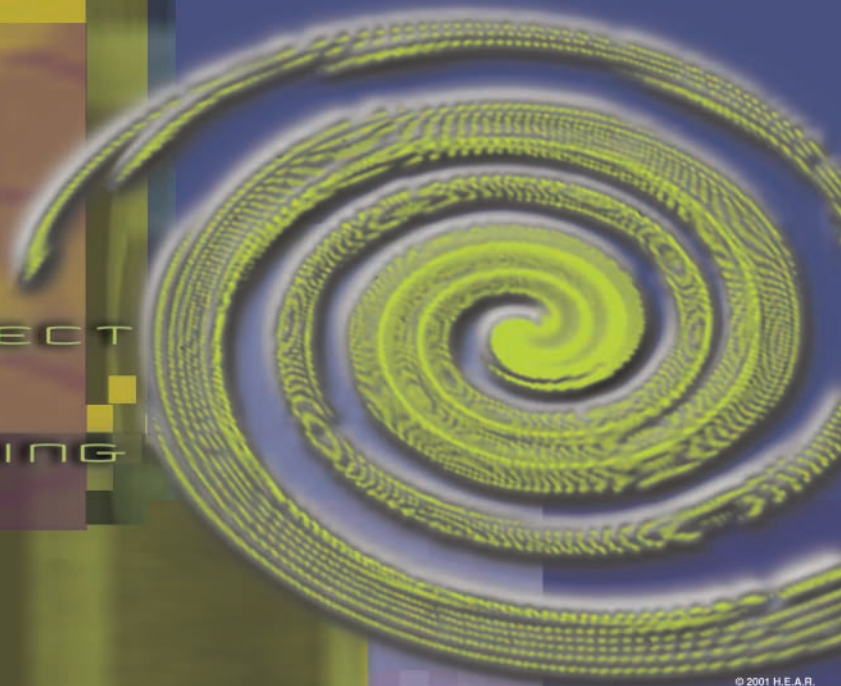


A safety message sponsored by: DanceSafe, Electric Dreams Foundation, H.E.A.R. and San Francisco Late Night Coalition

PROTECT
YOUR
HEARING



WHAT IS HEARING DAMAGE?

- Hearing damage can take the form of temporary or permanent ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and loss of the ability to hear clearly.
- Amplified music can cause noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). A study in Great Britain found that 62% of regular clubbers have symptoms of hearing loss.
- The risk of hearing damage depends on: (1) how loud the music is; (2) how close you are to the speakers; (3) how long you're on the dance floor; (4) previous hearing damage.
- You may be at risk if you have a family history of hearing loss.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF HEARING DAMAGE?

- You hear ringing in your ears; you're sensitive to loud noises.
- You have difficulty hearing others when there is background noise.
- People sound like they're mumbling or talking too quickly; you have to ask them to repeat themselves.
- You need to turn the volume on the TV or radio higher than others.
- You hear the telephone better with one ear than the other.

If you have any of these symptoms get your hearing checked by a hearing health professional. To prevent more damage wear ear plugs!

BE CAREFUL

- Sound levels in dance clubs can be as high as 115 decibels, which can cause damage within a few seconds.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from the speakers—dancing in front of speakers is very risky.

- Use ear plugs—cotton and rolled up tissue paper provide NO protection.
- Ask that sound levels be turned down if too loud.
- Don't talk on the dance floor—shouting into ears can damage hearing.
- Alcohol and drugs lower your sense of pain and increase the risk of hearing damage. Being tired, dehydrated, and overheated also increases risk.
- Drink plenty of water. Take 10 to 30 minute breaks where sound levels are lower.
- If you dance a lot or work in a club, consider getting custom earplugs for music attenuation to protect your hearing without distorting sound (see H.E.A.R. link below for hearing help).

HOW TO USE FOAM EARPLUGS

1. With clean hands, roll the earplug until it is as thin as possible.
2. Quickly insert the tapered end all the way into your ear.
3. Hold it in place for at least 30 seconds until it fully expands.
4. Release the earplug then gently push it in one more time to ensure a complete fit. The end should be even with the opening of your ear canal.



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