



by David Glaser, Au.D., CCC-A, FAAA
Doctor of Audiology

AIRPORT NOISE AND HEALTH PROBLEMS

With airports multiplying and expanding, the International Civil Aviation Organization estimates that the number of take-offs and landings will double over the next 20 years. While previous research has demonstrated that exposure to aircraft noise on a regular basis is linked with sleep disturbances, breathing problems during the night, and nervousness, a new study has uncovered an association between long-term aircraft noise and [hypertension](#). Researchers found that those living closest to airports, where they regularly experienced aircraft sounds of 60 decibels or more, had almost twice the incidence of hypertension as those living in quieter areas (40% versus 24%). Airport noise was also linked to heart changes (aortic stiffness and higher ventricular mass) that can lead to heart attack and stroke.

TIP OF THE WEEK

If you are exposed to noise on a regular basis and feel that your hearing abilities have decreased, use hearing protection to protect your ears and have a comprehensive hearing evaluation performed.

P.S. Airport noise may lead to higher blood pressure due to the release of stress hormones that naturally raise blood pressure.

AA-45