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## **MAKING A QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCE**

Hearing loss can affect older individuals in ways that may not be readily apparent. Because hearing loss makes it more difficult to carry on a conversation, it can impair the ability to socialize with others, causing hearing-impaired individuals to become anxious, depressed, and paranoid. From a physical standpoint, uncorrected hearing loss has also been linked with a threefold increased risk of falling (compared to people without hearing loss). Hearing loss is also associated with slower walking speed. In fact, a person with hearing loss will walk at the pace of someone who is 12.5 years older. Both the increased risk of falling and slower gait speed may result from hearing loss' association with inner-ear problems that affect equilibrium.

### **TIP OF THE WEEK**

With hearing instrument technology, hearing abilities can never be restored. The goal of a successful fitting is to improve overall communication abilities, which will improve overall quality of life.

P.S. According to one 2013 comprehensive review of 50 studies, only 39% of people with hearing loss rated the quality of their lives as "excellent," while 69% of people with normal hearing did.

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