

Dann Hearing Center

Hearing Healthcare News

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Phonak Introduces New Rechargeable Aid: Belong

Phonak has introduced a brand new device (called Belong) to go with their latest generation of hearing aids. Belong has more processing power than the previous aid (called Venture) and with this advancement in technology comes enhancements to some features, especially when it comes to noise reduction. There is also, for the first time, a rechargeable hearing aid, called the Belong B-R.

The Belong is only available in a style called Receiver-in the-Ear (or RITE). This aid fits behind the ear with a thin wire attached to it. At the end of the wire is the receiver. The receiver fits into the

ear canal and through it the processed sound from the aid is delivered. The RITE type of aid is very popular because of its cosmetic appeal and the natural sound quality.

Belong devices have, like other aids, the ability to communicate with each other. Phonak calls this “Binaural Voice Stream Technology,” which, according to the company, is where the two aids work together to achieve the best hearing in a variety of challenging listening environments. With their new Autosense OS operating system, the Belong aids will adjust to different listening situations.

With Autosense OS, according to Phonak, there are some enhancements:

- An improvement of 60% in hearing speech in noise by zooming in on a single speaker.
- A 37% reduction “in effort when listening to conversations in the car-compared with prior technology.”

Better fidelity of music when Autosense goes to music listening mode.

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Download hearing apps onto your smartphone.

Closed Caption Apps for Your Smartphone

The phone can be a lifeline for some. It is especially so for those with hearing loss. If there is an emergency and you need to contact someone, it might be difficult to hear the words from your phone. What if you could see the words as well as hear them? This would certainly be a great help in communicating.

There are several apps that are available for your smartphone,

either iPhone or Android. Some transcribe phone calls, and some are used for watching movies and TV on your mobile device.

Hamilton CapTel

This app lets you read what is being said while using the phone. You need a CapTel account as well as a hands free headset. In addition you need a voice and data plan from your wireless carrier.

There is no cost to register your phone, and there is no cost for the service. More details can be found at HamiltonCapTel.com.

Clear Captions

Like the Hamilton CapTel app, this app will transcribe the words on your phone. There is a one time fee for this.

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The Audéo B-R uses a lithium-ion battery that provides 24 hours of hearing ability and 80 minutes of streaming time after a 3 hour charge.

“The link to good cardiovascular health and better hearing, even to those with hearing loss, is more oxygen rich blood flowing through the cochlea.”



Hearing Aid Sweatband is available in a variety of colors.

Phonak Introduces New Rechargeable Aid: Belong

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The premium version of the Belong platform is the B90. The B90 has several features that the wearer will find helpful:

Speech in 360°: This is when two hearing aids try to focus on speech in a group situation. The aids, working together, “select the speech and stream it to the other ear, improving speech intelligibility without the need to face the speaker.”

Speech in Loud Noise: Using Stereo Zoom, the aids have a very focused listening area. This is used when you want to hear just one person in a diffuse listening environment. When the

aids are in Stereo Zoom, the person to whom you are listening will be easier to hear, since the surrounding noise is being suppressed.

As mentioned previously, Phonak has rechargeable versions of the Belong aids. The rechargeable aid is the Audéo B-R. The B-R comes in the same technology levels as the Audéo B, from the basic B-R 50 to the premium B-R 90.

The Audéo B-R uses a lithium ion battery that provides 24 hours of hearing ability and 80 minutes of streaming time. Streaming is when you have your hearing aids paired to your

phone or other devices, such as an iPad. Streaming drains the battery quicker than using the aids normally.

The aids are put into a charger overnight. It takes about 3 hours of charging to have the aid useable for 24 hours. When the aids are charged up just take them out, push the button on the aid, and put them in your ears. It’s that easy. The charger also contains a drying agent to keep moisture from building up in the aids. There is a good comparison of the features of the Audéo B and B-R on Phonak.com. You can also call us at 203-866-3838 if you have any questions about the Belong

Hearing Aids Can Be Your Best Workout Partner

Many people with hearing aids exercise or play some sport such as tennis or golf, and even run marathons. Numerous studies have shown the benefits of exercise to overall health and better hearing.

The link to good cardiovascular health and better hearing, even to those with hearing loss, is that more oxygen rich blood is flowing through the cochlea (one of the main organs in the inner ear responsible for hearing and understanding speech). This ensures the neural integrity of the outer hair cells within the cochlea.

Today’s hearing aids are much

more resistant to moisture and dust than they used to be. If you wear hearing aids when you workout or play a sport, there are a few things your aids do for you:

Increased ability to communicate: If you play a team sport you need to hear your teammates. If you have a workout partner, it is certainly more pleasant and social to hear what they are saying.

Personal Safety: Runners and bikers are safer when they can hear the sirens of emergency personnel

Listen to Music: Today’s hear-

ing aids are almost always compatible with Bluetooth-enabled devices such as an iPhone or iPad, or Android phone.

With a Bluetooth connection you can stream your favorite tunes or audiobooks. This will certainly make the workout less tedious and more enjoyable.

Things you should have:

Hearing Aid Sweatband: This will help keep moisture from getting into your behind the ear aids. These sweatbands fit over the aid, and come in a variety of colors. For more information, go to HearingAidSweatband.com.

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Hearing Aids Can Be Your Best Workout Partner

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Hearing Aid Clip: These clips can go onto a Behind-the-Ear aid and attach to your clothing. This makes it more difficult to dislodge the aid and lose it or damage it. If you have a canal or in-the-ear aid, a small metal loop can be added to attach the clip. Most clips cost between \$8 and \$12.

Batteries: It is always good to have batteries that work. You

don't want to be exercising or playing a sport and have your batteries go dead. It is probably a good idea to have a spare package or two in your workout bag.

Post workout care: After your workout or sport you should disinfect your aids with disinfectant wipes. You should also have a small pick and a brush to remove wax and debris from your aids. Another effective tool is a Dri-Aid kit or a machine called a Dry and

Store (see article below). These accessories will keep moisture from building up in your aids, and moisture in aids can cause them to go dead or be weak.

For more on this topic, visit DannHearing.com



Numerous studies have shown the benefits of exercise to overall health and better hearing.

Keeping Moisture Out of Your Hearing Aids

Moisture and hearing aids are not a good combination. Moisture can cause corrosion of the circuits in a hearing aid, or if you have a behind the ear aid with a tubing attached to an earmold, the condensation can form on the inside of the tubing, which will prevent the sound from going into your ear. Moisture also reduces the overall life expectancy of the hearing aids.

So what can you do? One thing is to get a hearing aid sweatband that

goes over the behind the ear aid. We mentioned this in the above article on using hearing aids when you are working out. These little covers prevent moisture from getting into the aids, especially if you sweat a lot. Check out the different varieties at HearingAidSweatband.com

Another solution is to purchase a machine that dries out the hearing aids at night and also disinfects them. The best one we have seen is

the Dry and Store. You just put your hearing aids in the machine and it will remove moisture as well as dry earwax in the aids and deodorizes the instruments. There are several models available but it is a great investment. Go to Dry-AndStore.com to get more information. The Dry and Store is also available from Amazon.com.

"It is probably a good idea to have a spare package of batteries in your workout bag."

Closed Caption Apps for Your Smartphone

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Live Caption

Live Caption allows users to understand a person, such as a waiter in the restaurant, more effectively when your hearing aids just won't do the trick. Just have the person speak into the microphone on your phone and the words will show up

in the app.

Closed Capp

This is similar to the Live Caption app mentioned above. It lets the person you want to hear speak into the phone and the words appear on the phone screen. This app will not transcribe phone calls.

Both the Live Caption and the Closed Capp apps are \$3.99 to purchase.

This article, and the one about working out, are condensed versions of articles on our website. Visit DannHearing.com.



If you wear hearing aids and want to hear a little better when you talk on the phone, help is only an app away.