

Going to the gym shouldn't be a workout for your eardrums

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Listening to an iPod while working out feels like second nature to many people, but University of Alberta researcher Bill Hodgetts says we need to consider the volume levels in our earphones while working up a sweat.

Hodgetts, assistant professor in the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology at the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, says his research has found that exercising in a gym often prompts people to turn up the volume to potentially unsafe levels for the ear.

The researcher found that the study participants, who were in a gym-like setting, listened at potentially dangerous levels while working out, likely due to the presence of [background noise](#). But he says it isn't the listening level alone that's risky, it's how long a person listens at that level. What Hodgetts found is that almost half of his study participants listened for a length of time during exercise that put them at risk for [hearing loss](#).

The good news? The solution is simple, he says: get better [earphones](#), those that "seal" the ear canal, acting as an earplug and thus reducing background noise.

Hodgetts' mission is to get the message out that proper earphones will make a huge difference in auditory health while allowing people to enjoy music at a lower, and safer volume.

Hodgetts' research was recently published in the *International Journal of Audiology*.

Provided by University of Alberta

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