

Don't let fireworks deafen you

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(HealthDay)—Fireworks are a beautiful sight to behold, but they can damage your hearing if you're not careful.

Protecting your [hearing](#) should be one of the [safety precautions](#) you take when you and your family are at fireworks displays and other events on the Fourth of July, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) says.

Fireworks and firecrackers can be as loud as 150 decibels, which is louder than a jackhammer or jet plane take-off. Noise levels of around 75 to 80 decibels are considered safe.

The louder the noise, the quicker hearing damage occurs, according to the ASHA.

Noise-induced [hearing loss](#) is completely preventable, but is irreversible once it occurs, the association warned in a news release.

The ASHA offered the following Independence Day hearing safety tips.

Use hearing protection. Basic earplugs can be picked up at drug stores and provide hearing protection for most teens and adults. For children, well-fitting earmuffs over earplugs are typically a good idea.

Keep your distance. Stay at least 500 feet from loud noise sources such as speakers, a stage, or fireworks launch sites. The closer you are, the greater the risk to your hearing.

Plan your exit strategy. If you develop ringing in your [ears](#) or any other ear discomfort, you should leave the event.

If you continue to have pain or ringing in the ears, or have difficulty hearing, see an audiologist for a hearing evaluation, the ASHA advised.

More information: The U.S. National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders has more on [noise-induced hearing loss](#).

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