

Hearing Aid Compatibility

When some mobile phones are used with certain hearing devices (including hearing aids and cochlear implants), users may detect a noise which can interfere with the effectiveness of the hearing device.

Some hearing devices are more “immune” than others to this interference noise, and mobile phones can also vary in the amount of interference noise they may generate at any given time. ANSI standard C63.19 was developed to provide a standardized means of measuring both mobile phone and hearing devices to determine usability rating categories for both.

Ratings have been developed for mobile phones to assist hearing device users find phones that may be compatible with their particular hearing device. Not all mobile phones are rated for compatibility with hearing devices, but mobile phones that are rated should have the rating available. This rating may depend on the position of a retractable antenna.

Results will vary depending on the user’s hearing device and individual type and degree of hearing loss. If a hearing device is particularly vulnerable to interference noise, even a mobile phone with a higher rating may still cause unacceptable noise levels in the hearing device. Evaluate your personal needs by trying out the mobile phone with your hearing device.

“M” Rating: Mobile phones rated M3 or M4 meet FCC requirements for hearing aid compatibility and are likely to generate less interference to hearing devices than phones that are not labeled. (M4 is the “better” or higher of the two ratings.)

“T” Rating: Mobile phones rated T3 or T4 meet FCC requirements for compatibility with telecoil-type (“T Switch” or “Telephone Switch”) hearing devices and are likely to be more usable with such hearing devices than unrated phones. (T4 is the “better” or higher of the two ratings.)

Hearing devices may also be measured for immunity to interference noise from mobile phones. In some cases, hearing devices can be modified or “hardened” to improve operation with a mobile phone. Your hearing device manufacturer or hearing health professional may help you improve the interaction of your mobile phone and hearing device. Not all hearing devices are rated for compatibility with mobile phones, but hearing devices that are rated should have the rating

available. Be sure to evaluate your personal needs by trying out this mobile phone with your specific hearing device, using both antenna positions if equipped with a retractable antenna.

More information about hearing aid compatibility may be found at:
<http://commerce.motorola.com/consumer/QWhtml/accessibility/default.html>, www.fcc.gov,
www.fda.gov, and www.accesswireless.org.