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LINK BETWEEN DIABETES AND HEARING LOSS

*Columbus Speech & Hearing Center is joining in support of
World Diabetes Day on November 14th.*

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Hearing loss is about twice as common in adults with diabetes compared to those who do not have the disease, according to a [study](#) funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Yet hearing screenings typically are not part of the regular regimen of care that people with diabetes are routinely recommended to receive.

“It’s so important that people with diabetes ask their doctors to refer them to an audiologist for a hearing evaluation. Even if there are no signs of hearing loss at this time, it is important to establish a baseline for these patients,” said Karen Mitchell, Director Audiology & Hearing Aid Services at Columbus Speech & Hearing Center. “Hearing loss affects virtually every aspect of a person’s life, making it all the harder for people with diabetes to cope with their disease. A hearing check is invaluable in determining whether or not someone with diabetes does have a hearing loss and will help to ensure that they get the treatment they need – not only to hear better, but also to improve their overall quality of life.”

World Diabetes Day (WDD) is the primary global awareness campaign of the diabetes world. It was introduced in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in response to the alarming rise in diabetes around the world. Roughly 250 million people worldwide are now living with diabetes. The IDF estimates that more than 300 million people worldwide are at risk for type 2 diabetes, which can be prevented in many cases by helping and encouraging those at risk to maintain a healthy weight and exercise regularly.

“For years, physicians who treat people with diabetes have regularly ensured that their patients receive regular vision check-ups,” said Sergei Kochkin, PhD, BHI’s executive director. “But they also need to encourage each of their patients to get their hearing checked as well.”

Numerous studies have linked untreated hearing loss to a wide range of physical and emotional conditions, including irritability, negativism, anger, fatigue, tension, stress, depression, avoidance or withdrawal from social situations, social rejection and loneliness, reduced alertness and increased risk to personal safety, impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks, reduced job performance and earning power, and diminished psychological and overall health.

"World Diabetes Day is important because it raises awareness of a serious global health problem," said Kochkin. "It's also important that people with diabetes understand that they may be at an increased risk of hearing loss as a result of their disease. We urge anyone with diabetes to have their hearing tested."

To schedule a hearing evaluation, please call 614.261.5452 or e-mail hearing@columbusspeech.org.

Columbus Speech & Hearing Center, founded in 1923, is a non-profit United Way organization serving over 10,000 people annually. Services include hearing evaluations, hearing aids, speech therapy for children and adults, occupational therapy and treatment, and vocational services for the Hard-of-Hearing, Deaf and Deaf-Blind through the Comprehensive Program for the Deaf and Ohio Deaf-Blind Outreach Program. Generous charitable giving from the community help offset the cost of the Center's valued services for low-income families. For more information, www.columbusspeech.org.