



Hard of Hearing

Amplification for Telehealth, Video Conferencing & Phone Calls

Tools used to amplify sound during a phone call or while using video conferencing are listed below. These tools can be used by people with or without professionally fit hearing devices, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants. Sound increasing devices can connect to a smartphone, tablet, or computer by either cables or Bluetooth. Cables often provide clearer audio and less delay between the picture and sound.

External Speakers:

- [High quality](#) speakers can provide better sound than speakers built into a webcam, computer, tablet, or smartphone

Headsets:

- Can be useful for overcoming background noise and may include noise cancellation features
- May be used with or without a hearing aid or cochlear implant (hearing aids may produce a squealing noise when covered by a headset)
- May have extra amplification built in
- Always ask your audiologist or hearing aid dispenser if it is safe before using a general-purpose headset with your hearing aid(s)

Amplified Telephones:

- Increase the sound level
- Usually have a variety of features to make voices easier to understand
 - For example, tone control is used to make the pitch of the voice higher or lower

Telephone Amplifier for Landline and Cell Phones:

- Cell phone amplifiers are often wireless Bluetooth devices made for cell phones
- A few are wired and plug into a phone's headset jack
- Amplifiers for landline phones either strap onto the receiver's earpiece or plug in between the phone base and the handset
 - Cordless landline phones may also have a jack for a headset or Bluetooth connection

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD):

- Can be a headset or amplification device connected to your computer, tablet, or smartphone to make sound easier to hear and understand
- Some provide tone settings
- The device can be connected by a cable or wirelessly
- A cable usually provides the clearest sound without interference or a delay between the sound and the video

For more information on device amplification please see: [Connecting Hearing Devices to Audio During Telehealth Video Meetings](#) and [Tips for Improving Visual Communication for Telehealth Appointments](#).

To learn more about your rights during telehealth appointments, and how to advocate for your communication access, please contact the [NC DSDHH Regional Center](#) near you.



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This document was developed through a collaborative process involving the National Consortium of Telehealth Resource Centers.

