

# Hearing aids open up a whole new world for Robert Renchik

A retiree realizes how important and precious his hearing is to everyday life, and does something about it.

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Sixty-two year old Robert Renchik ignored his hearing loss for nearly five years, despite friends and family members expressing frustration over difficulty conversing with him. Robert has multiple sclerosis (MS) and figured his gradually worsening hearing loss and the frequent ringing sound in his left ear were side effects. But after seeing a family member's fight to recover from complete hearing loss, he realized how important and precious his hearing was to his everyday life.

Robert's initial decision not to seek treatment put him in the majority of senior citizens who suffer from hearing loss. According to a new report published by Sivantos, Inc., a majority of seniors who realize they have some degree of hearing loss refuse to seek diagnoses or wear hearing aids, and are in denial about the negative effects of those decisions. However, Robert started to re-think his decision after realizing his condition was impeding his interactions with family and friends.

"My wife would ask me something and too often I found myself saying 'what?' or 'huh?' and would have to keep asking people to repeat themselves," Robert said. Still, he felt self-conscious about

how others might perceive him if he started wearing hearing aids. "Then my father-in-law underwent cochlear implant surgery, and could hear again after a year of being totally deaf. He's once again able to communicate with us. That prompted me to get something done."

Robert decided to try Siemens Carat™ binax smart hearing aids, along with the easyTek™ audio streamer, which wirelessly connects his hearing aids to his smartphone and other Bluetooth®-enabled devices.

"They opened up a whole new world," he said. "As soon as I put them in my ears for the first time, the difference was nothing short of amazing."

In addition to improving his social interactions, the Carat hearing aids help Robert stay active in community affairs. "I go to a lot of conventions and listen to speakers in large groups," he said. "I no longer have to try to read lips, which is very difficult in group settings. Being able to hear what's going on is liberating."

Now, Robert's only regret is that he let his fears over how people would perceive him prevent him from getting help sooner.



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