



- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Inserted Text Date: 7/21/11 1:49:15 AM
 add a comma
- I Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Comment on Text Date: 7/21/11 1:49:40 AM
 headphones
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 1:50:01 AM
 DJs
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 1:50:41 AM
 begin
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Cross-Out Date: 7/21/11 1:52:54 AM
- I Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Comment on Text Date: 7/21/11 1:44:29 AM
 explained Maris Appelbaum, Director of Hearing Aid Services at Montclair State University.
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Cross-Out Date: 7/21/11 1:37:04 AM
 cut this comma
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Cross-Out Date: 7/21/11 1:52:07 AM
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 1:35:52 AM
 dance floor
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 2:11:20 AM
 unless this is the brand name of a specific type of earplugs, then this should be:
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 2:12:57 AM
 musicians earplugs
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 2:14:33 AM
 Hear
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Cross-Out Date: 7/21/11 2:14:33 AM
 nowhere on this site do I find anything about Mack's Hear Plugs availability
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Inserted Text Date: 7/21/11 1:53:28 AM
 Add a double-quote here
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 2:15:24 AM
 ER20
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 2:15:43 AM
 earplugs
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Replacement Text Date: 7/21/11 1:36:19 AM
 dance floor
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Inserted Text Date: 7/21/11 1:45:49 AM
 add a comma
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Inserted Text Date: 7/21/11 1:55:47 AM
 add a comma
- T Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Inserted Text Date: 7/21/11 1:55:58 AM

Comments from page 1 continued on next page

NOISE OVERDOSE

HOW THE DANCEFLOOR DAMAGES OUR EARS

The most common reason DJs have their monitors too high is that they have their headphones blasting really high in their ear.

By D. Michael Taylor

It's All Gone Pete Tong

In 2004, a Canadian independent film was released about a DJ who lost his livelihood because he went completely deaf. It's *All Gone Pete Tong* was a fictional tale, but a bevy of club world heavyweights, including the legendary Pete Tong himself, decided to join the project as talking heads in the mockumentary. Unfortunately, the movie's depiction of rampant deafness among DJs was hardly fiction.

Any DJ, sound technician, promoter, or avid party person should recognize that hearing loss is a very real threat on the dancefloor. Superstar DJ Danny Tenaglia has been talking about dealing with tinnitus via white noise therapy on his Facebook page. Guy Smith, the Circuit's premier lighting wizard, told *noize*, "There are a lot of DJs that we work with — I won't name names — but you can call their name right behind them and they can't hear you." Smith himself suffers from tinnitus, which he describes as "a constant shrieking in my ears." DJ Quentin Harris suffers from hearing loss, and told *noize* that if he leaves both monitors on all night he leaves the club with a headache.

This problem isn't exclusive to our community, of course. The list of people suffering from some form of hearing loss or tinnitus reads like a Kennedy Center Honors list.

Barbra Streisand, Bill Clinton, Bono, Cher, Pete Townshend, William Shatner, Steve Martin. The U.S. National Institute on Deafness approximates that 28 million Americans are affected by noise-induced hearing loss, a number expected to climb to 78 million by 2030. Dr. Kent Collins, an audiologist, claims that the average age of patients who require hearing aids has gone down, from 64 to 48, in only 10 years.

What exactly causes this damage? Our ears have an outer, a middle, and an inner section. "In the inner ear there are hair cells," explained Director of Hearing Aid Services at Montclair State University, Maris Appelbaum. "The conversion of sound into neural activity is believed to happen by the tips of the hair cells." The inner ear houses the delicate hairs that allow us to process everyday sounds. When those hairs are exposed to frequencies and pressure, whether it's a sudden explosion of sound or a prolonged exposure to very loud music, they become damaged. That damage can be temporary or permanent, from annoying to debilitating. "It's never too late to wear ear protection," Appelbaum added.

OSHA, the federal agency that regulates workplace safety, has permissible noise levels for industrial noise. "There are no levels for music," says Appelbaum, "because the levels vary greatly and it's difficult to estimate a person's time exposure over time." OSHA caps industrial noise levels at 85 dB (decibels). Rock concerts and dance events rock in at 110 to 120 dB, just above a diesel train and right below a gun shot or a jet taking off. Guy Smith has been clocking sound pressure on

the dance floor since the disco era and says that his readings indicate a fourfold increase on the dance floor since then.

Aural Fixation

DJs are the centerpiece of the music we listen to, and love loud music just as much as we do, but the ones who have been around the longest know the score: and realize that more sound doesn't necessarily equal better sound. Is Michael Fierman a rare exception to the rule about DJs who suffer from hearing loss because he pioneered "Morning Music" sets and the peppy Fire Island sound? "I have perfect hearing after playing records for over 30 years," he boasts. His secret is deceptively simple: "Turn the volume of your monitors down and then you can turn down the level of your headphones."

David Knapp sees the link between headphones and monitors as crucial. "Based on my experience, the most common reason DJs have their monitors so high is that they have their headphones blasting really high in their ear. A secret I learned from a mentor DJ is to start out keeping the headphone level as low as possible," he advises, "just enough to hear what you are mixing in." If not, a DJ can begin to suffer "aural fatigue," the term for continually turning up the volume to compensate for weaker and weaker hearing, means they keep turning up the volume. As the DJ gets deaf, so does the crowd.

Quentin Harris gives the age-old advice to read your crowd. "Watch your levels and watch your dancers," he says. "They will let you know if you are playing too loud." Chances are if you see people shouting at each other or holding their hands to their ears, they're not really enjoying your set anyway. That includes pounding tribal beats or drum-and-bass, which seem to go with high volume. But does it have to be that loud?

The Saint At Large hired sound engineer and DJ Alex Funk to fine-tune the sound for Black Party this year. Just renting an expensive system isn't enough, warns Funk: "I've heard of people bringing in half-million-dollar sound systems that when they were set up sounded like absolute dog shit." He likens it

to tuning an expensive and very fast car: If you don't do it just right, you end up with smoke coming out of the hood. In this case, if the smoke isn't coming from under the hood, it's coming out of your ears.

Less Can Be More

Guy Smith and Funk teamed up with the new owners of Fire Island's Pavilion last year to improve sound quality. The key? Less is more. "One of the changes that we made was that we actually removed equipment because there was so much equipment it was defeating itself." They repositioned speakers and installed technology that allows them to modulate the sound for optimal performance.

So how do you protect your ears? Earplugs, of course. Knapp believes it's gotten to the point that event promoters should consider approaching earplug makers to sponsor their parties. And how do you know if it's too loud? "If you have any urge to put your hand over your ears, that's your body telling you that it doesn't like it," Funk says.

As a musician who suffered from hearing-related problems, Kathy Peck formed Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers (H.E.A.R.), 23 years ago in San Francisco as a response to a lack of advocacy in the concert world for hearing-related issues. The Who's Pete Townshend was an early financial backer of the group — one of many veteran rockers now suffering deafness. H.E.A.R. produces public service announcements and helped pass a local ordinance that requires music venues to distribute free earplugs. Peck recommends custom Musicians Earplugs. Mack's HEAR Plugs available at www.hear.net.com. ER-20 Earplugs — or foam earplugs in a pinch.

Fierman, for one, believes that if a significant number of people on the dancefloor are wearing earplugs, the DJ and sound engineer are doing something wrong. "The reality is that if someone is dropping 100,000 watts of sound system into a building or out on a beach, they have a huge responsibility for people's health," Smith says. Europe caps the sound level in clubs at 95 dB, but currently we have no such regulation. That may change as an entire generation becomes hard of hearing.

add a comma

Author: jefferytaylor Subject: Sticky Note Date: 7/21/11 1:40:33 AM

this text is overlapping the logo and page number