

Communicating Better with Your Hearing-Impaired Friends and Family *By Deborah Blaylock, Au D*

“What?” Do you hear that phrase often from your spouse or other family or friends? If so, here are some things you can do to help ease frustration on both sides.

- Don't just assume that the hearing-impaired person is listening to you. Get their attention before you speak.
- Instead of repeating what you said word for word, use a different word or phrase and see if that helps.
- Don't cover your mouth when you are speaking. Most hearing-impaired people use visual clues to fill in what they might be missing.
- Don't expect a hearing-impaired person to hear you from another room. Go to them, get their attention and then speak.
- Don't yell at the hearing-impaired person. Use a strong voice and enunciate clearly to help speech understanding.
- If you are changing the topic of conversation, let the hearing-impaired person know that you are talking about something new. For instance, instead of saying, “When are we leaving?”

introduce the topic first by saying, “I want to talk about dinner tonight. When are we leaving?”

- When choosing a restaurant, make a choice better suited for a hearing-impaired person. Choose a place that has low ceilings and/or carpet and sit in a booth rather than at a table. If you need to sit at a table, choose one that is near a wall. All of these qualities in a restaurant mean that extra sounds can be absorbed, leaving the hearing-impaired person with less noise to sort through before hearing what he/she wants to hear.
- Finally, don't assume that a hearing-impaired person doesn't want to participate in a conversation if he/she is not appearing to be actively involved. Instead, ask the hearing-impaired person if they are able to hear and then if not, try any of the tips listed above.

Many of these communication strategies work well for normal hearing people as well, so keep them in mind and use them on a daily basis to help encourage better communication at all times and in all places!

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month!

Welcome to Christina Szabo, MSN, ANP-C

On April 1st, certified adult nurse practitioner Christina Szabo joined the Thunderbird Internal Medicine team. A veteran of the U.S. Army, Christina has worked in a variety of clinical settings and is a graduate of the Adult-Gerontological Nurse Practitioner program at the University of South Alabama in Mobile. Christine will be caring for patients in both the Glendale and Estrella offices.



Thunderbird Internal Medicine – Glendale
5620 W. Thunderbird Rd #C-1, #F-1 & #G-2
Glendale, Arizona 85306

Thunderbird Internal Medicine - Phoenix
9150 W. Indian School Rd #118
Phoenix, Arizona 85037