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*The PEPNet
Past Posts is a
compilation of
the most
frequently
discussed topics
on the PEPNet
listserv.*

The PEPNet Listserv

Past Posts

Medical Supply Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

The posts in this document discuss the different resources available to Deaf and Hard of Hearing students pursuing a career in the medical fields. The focus of these postings are about clear surgical masks and stethoscopes.

PEPNet has also developed a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document related to this topic titled, "An incoming student majoring in a health sciences program needs a stethoscope." The FAQ is available at <http://www.pepnet.org/faq.asp>.

August/September 2009

Clear Surgical Masks

Does any one know of a vendor that carries clear surgical masks that will allow for lip reading? The faculty does not want to wear a clear face shield but is open to wearing a clear surgical mask if we can find a vendor that makes them. Thanks in advance for your assistance with this.

University of Minnesota

There is an update on the availability of clear masks on the AMPHL (Association of Medical Professionals with Hearing Losses) website: <http://www.amphl.org/>

PEPNet-Northeast

You've probably already discovered this from AMPHL but there is a surgical mask with a clear window of plastic in it. My understanding is that they're warmer and less comfortable to use because the plastic is not as breathable as the standard material on a mask. Also, they sometimes steam up and are more costly to purchase--definite negatives.

One other point, the mask is protective in a standard medical setting. But, if there is a "droplet precaution" posted for a patient, they are not approved to replace an N95 mask. Or at least they weren't a few years ago when I needed them. Maybe things have improved. The med student I know doesn't like them at all.

University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

This is VERY new information and it's fantastic news. Up until recently, surgical mask manufacturers weren't interested in developing this. However, they'd like feedback from people who would use it, and Stacey Carroll ([advocacy at amphl.org](http://www.amphl.org/)) is coordinating that effort.

PEPNet-South

February 2008

Question:

A student is looking for an amplified stethoscope that she can use with her hearing aids. She currently has a stethoscope that works well, good amplification, but she has to remove and replace her hearing aids all the time. We contacted the company, but they don't have any that would connect to a neck loop or to a head set. Ideally she would like one that connects to a neck loop/t-switch.

I referred her to AMPHL for and hopefully she will find some info there. But I thought maybe someone out there has a good recommendation that I could share with her.

*Northcentral Technical College
Wausau, WI*

Response:

I used to purchase amplified stethoscopes through audiologists when I was a VR Counselor for the D/HH. There may be a mark up if she does not go to an ALD Catalogue or company. I used the LS&S Group a lot as they were so helpful with what is the best device to use, etc. and if they did not have it, they would tell me how to obtain it.

So, I suggest she check with: <http://www.lssproducts.com/category/assistive-listening-devices>
And talk with them and check what they have. And also check with the audiologist from whom she orders her hearing aids.

She will need this for her job as well as college, so if she is a VR Client, they may purchase it. I use to pay about \$500.

Location not available

February 2007

Question:

I have a new situation I am seeking advice on. I have been contacted by faculty in the Sports Training/Management Department in regards to a student who needs an amplified stethoscope in order to take blood pressure and heart rate. It is an essential part of the course requirements for graduation. The student has a hearing loss of severe to profound sensori-neural hearing loss bilaterally at the mid to high frequency range (1000 Hz - 8000 Hz).

The faculty member has contacted a local hospital to research amplified stethoscopes. The hospital loaned out a Cardiobeat by Medsonics <http://www.buyemp.com/product/1040501.html>. The student has used the product but stated he was unable to clearly distinguish beats. My long winded question is this... does anyone know of other amplified stethoscope products available on the market? The other question the professor raised is could the issue be lack of experience? This is the first time the students have used a stethoscope and it is difficult for beginners to distinguish the beginning and ending beats. So, could this be an issue related to hearing loss or to inexperience? I appreciate your help as this is new territory for our college and the student.

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

The best info I have on stethoscopes is on the AMPHL website at www.amphl.org. Look on the left side and scroll down to "Stethoscope Info." Students sometimes have to try a few to see which one works the best for them. You're also right about experience -- it's also hard to know what to listen for when using a scope if you haven't heard these sounds before.

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Please encourage the student to review the AMPHL website. Because membership in this group includes medical professionals from various fields, there's lots of good info shared. The AMPHL forums also provide an opportunity to ask questions and get feedback from peers.

Another resource is www.ExceptionalNurse.com. Go to "Equipment & Tech" for info about amplified stethoscopes.

PEPNet-South

It could very well be a combination of experience using it and interpreting what he is hearing. But there are several options with amplified stethoscopes, and I believe you can even get the earpiece fitted with ear-molds. Check with Becky Morris and her business www.beyondhearing.com. She had an article there "How to cope with scopes" and can give you more info about options (and of course she sells them, too).

*Western Oregon University
Monmouth, OR*

I do have one piece of advice. It will be in the student's best interest to use a stethoscope option that will interface with their hearing aids since there is a severe to profound hearing loss. It is not likely that an amplified stethoscope will provide enough amplification if they must remove their hearing aids. If the assumption that the student has behind the ear hearing aids is true, then they will want to look at either telecoil or direct audio input interfaces to allow the hearing aids to amplify the sounds from the stethoscope. The Cardionics Escape is the only one with interfaces available for these options.

Location not available

You may want to check with www.maxiaids.com. The catch is the student will need to work with an audiologist after purchasing the stethoscope. I investigated The E-Scope II with dual direct audio cables. These instruments have to be tuned to the person's hearing aids.

*Ivy Tech Community College
Kokomo, IN*