**The importance of looking after our ears**

* Our ears are the only sensory organ that receives information 360° and are active 24/7.
* The ears provides energy to the brain. Our voice energizes the brain and it is a well-known fact that opera singers struggle to sleep after a performance – they are too energized.
* This amazing organ develops in utero and at 5 months the little bones (ossicles) start moving.
* The mother’s voice can be perceived by the foetus through the bone conduction of her voice down the spine, which awakens the intent to communicate and forms the emotional bond with the mother.

 Our ears are linked to:

* Working memory – holding information for a short while and do something with the information
* Procedural memory – the steps of doing a task and doing it automatically (driving a car)
* Vestibular system – movement and balance
* Emotional regulation

**How do we look after our ears and prevent hearing loss?**

* Exposure to loud noises can damage the hair cells in the ear and lead to hearing loss. Our Western world is saturated in loud noise – music at a loud volume, machines, etc

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Noise source | Decibel level (dB) | How long can you listen without protection? |
| Jett take off | 130 dB | 0 |
| Ambulance siren | 109 dB | Less than 2 minutes |
| Personal music player at maximum volume | 106 dB | 3.75 minutes |
| Pop/rock concert | 103 dB | 7.5 minutes |
| Riding a motor cycle | 97 dB | 30 minutes |
| Using an electric drill | 94 dB | 1 hour |

* Diet: sensitivities to certain foods can affect our ears. Gluten, dairy and preservatives are well known for affecting ears.
* Using cotton buds to “clean out” our ears. Audiologists and doctors recommend that nothing bigger than your elbow should go into your ear!