

# The Skinny on Open Fit Hearing Aids

By Pat Fournier BC-HIS

I just came back from Starkey's Minneapolis factory. Hundreds of dispensers and I were schooled on Starkey's new Zon (pronounced as zone) hearing aid. The Zon is Starkey's answer to the Phonak Audeo, and the ReSound Dot open fit hearing aids.

Each of these models offers Receiver In Canal technology. RIC technology's great benefit is more amplification with an open fit without feedback. This RIC technology is specially suited to high frequency hearing loss. This is the type of hearing loss that is most often associated with noise exposure. For younger people (in their 50's and 60's) this is one of the first experiences of hearing loss.

One advantage we have here at The Hearing Place is that we carry more than one brand of hearing aid. Each brand has its strong suit. Each hearing instrument has its strengths and weaknesses. RIC technology is an excellent example of this. The ZON, the Audeo and the Dot are all designed for the same market. All are designed to be sleek looking and small. However, I recommend each of them for different users.

ReSound's Dot is very tiny and fully automatic. It has a very good environmental detector that allows the hearing aid to adjust automatically to different situations. Its downside is that the aid can be a little fragile. Also, because it is automatic there are no user adjustments. The Dot won't accept an ALD.



(Assistive Listening Device)



The Audeo offers the most flexibility. It has the most precise adjustments. It can reach the highest frequencies for amplification. It can be programmed to be automatic or programmed with a remote control. It allows the user to access multiple memories or programs for different listening situations. The Audeo can incorporate an ALD (Assistive Listening Device). ALDs are great for picking up a specific sound source without background noise interference. The Audeo's downside is that it is too technical for some people. Also, the Audeo won't handle a severe high frequency loss because it can feed back (whistle).

Starkey's Zon is very well designed. It has the best high frequency amplifier by 20 dB of stable gain. It has the best automatic telephone response. It also has the best feedback control (No whistle!). It is designed to be automatic and you can over ride the auto setting with a push button on the back. The Zon's downside is that it won't accept an ALD. Also, it is a little larger than the other two.

Each of these products produces great sound. Each manufacturer offers their models at different price points. We recommend one product over another because we don't just fit hearing aids. We fit **individual people** with the best hearing instrument for them!



## Proper way of Cleaning Hearing Aids

By Sue Sherman and Pat Fournier

### Steps in the Cleaning of ITE, ITC & CIC



**Step 1:** Purchase a wax pick and brush from your audiologist or hearing aid supplier. Sometimes these are included with the purchase of your hearing aid. (See example below)

Magnet



- All in one tool combines brush, magnet and wire loop.
- Magnet makes battery changing easier.

**Step 2:** Remove the hearing aid from your ear.

**Step 3:** Examine the hearing aid for accumulated wax. If there is wax in the receiver, remove the wax with the wire loop. If wax in vent run the long plastic wire through it.

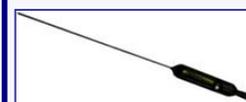
**Step 4:** Clean the outside of the hearing aid with a soft cloth.

**Step 5:** Remove the battery. Using the brush, clean the battery compartment by brushing gently.

### Steps in the Cleaning Of Open Fit and BTE



**Step 1:** See step 1 from ITC, ITE and CIC cleaning.



- Long plastic wire for cleaning open fit tubes and ear molds
- Overall length is approximately 5 inches.

**Step 2:** Remove the ear mold or slim tube from your ear.

**Step 3:** Examine the hearing aid for accumulated wax. If there is wax in the tube or ear mold insert the plastic wire to free up opening. Ear molds may be put in soapy water. (Don't immerse the actual aid just the ear mold). Let dry completely before reattaching them to the hearing aid.

**Step 4&5:** See above steps for 4 & 5 cleaning.

#### Warning:

- Never use alcohol or cleansers on hearing aids.
- Never use a straight pin or other sharp objects.