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Manity: Britain's men are listening in vain

BRITISH men are too vain to get their hearing checked because they are worried about appearing old, new research shows.

The Specsavers Manity survey revealed that while more men than women are worried about losing their hearing (57% vs 48%), almost a quarter of them have avoided getting a hearing test over fears that a hearing aid – should they need one – will make them look old and frumpy. This is far higher than the 13% of women, who have the same concerns.

It also found that almost half (45%) of UK adults would avoid going out to social gatherings due to their hearing loss – with a quarter of men (23%) saying they would avoid these situations because they fear people will notice their hearing aid.

But interestingly, while three in 10 men said they would feel self-conscious wearing a hearing aid because they are worried people would judge them (compared to 23% of women), almost all adults surveyed (91%) said if hearing aids were more stylish and discreet, they would wear one if they needed to.

The research of 2,002 UK adults was conducted by Atomik Research on behalf of Specsavers to coincide with the launch of the Signia Styletto – a stylish new hearing device available exclusively at Specsavers stores.

The Signia Styletto is a high-tech hearing aid which comes with a portable charging station. It is the first of its kind to have a sleek, slim-line look and is available in three colour combinations for the style-conscious – dark granite and silver, cosmic blue and rose gold and snow white and rose gold.

Gordon Harrison, Specsavers Chief Audiologist, says: 'Our research shows that there is still a stigma attached to hearing loss and hearing aids – particularly with males. But nine out of 10 of those asked said that if hearing aids were more stylish and discreet they would wear them if they need to. The new Signia Styletto is exactly that and we hope this new aid will help open up the conversation surrounding hearing loss and ensure no one misses a moment.'

Specsavers Manity Survey also found:

- 25-34-year-olds are the most concerned about losing their hearing (72%)
- 52% of UK adults worry that they are losing their hearing
- 34% of UK adults would rather miss out on conversation than admit they can't hear – with this applying to more men than women (38% compared to 31%)
- One fifth of people have avoided getting their hearing checked because they don't want to wear a hearing aid
- 45% of UK adults would avoid going out to social gatherings due to their hearing loss, with reasons including they wouldn't want to have to keep asking people to repeat themselves (24%), being afraid of people noticing their hearing aid (19%) and finding loud music disorientating (17%)
- 43% would feel self-conscious wearing a hearing aid because of the way it looks
- Overall, 57% would feel self-conscious wearing a hearing aid, for reasons including feeling old (33%) and the impact on appearance (24%)

Specsavers recommends that those over the age of 55 should have their hearing checked every two years, and if you are concerned about your hearing make an

appointment to see your Specsavers audiologist. To find out where your nearest Specsavers store is and to book a hearing check visit

www.specsavers.co.uk/hearing

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Issued by Beattie Communications on behalf of Specsavers

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Specsavers notes to editors

- Specsavers is a partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run businesses throughout the world -all committed to delivering high quality, affordable optical and hearing care in the communities they serve.
- Each store is part-owned and managed by its own joint venture partners who are supported by key specialists in support offices
- More than 36 million customers used Specsavers in 2017 and the partnership had a turnover of more than £2.6bn.
- More than one in three people who wear glasses in the UK buy them from Specsavers.
- Specsavers is a champion of the National Health Service – of its 19.2m customers in the UK, 60% are from the NHS and the company is the largest provider of free NHS digital hearing aids
- Specsavers supports several UK charities and is in partnership with RNIB for a public awareness campaign to transform the nation's eye health.