



Shake your sugar sachet! Can you hear the soft “sh” sound with both ears? Book a hearing test with an audiologist near you. Visit www.audiologysa.co.za.

Take a photo of you “shaking your sugar” or of any Shake Your Sugar promotional material, add it to the Shake Your Sugar Facebook page, and you can stand a chance to win a **cash prize** sponsored by **Widex!**

Competition closes: **25 March 2015**.
Winners will be announced: **31 March 2015**.



SHAKE YOUR SUGAR: MEDIA RELEASE (SHORT)

The World Health Organization (W.H.O) named the **3 March ‘International Ear Care Day’**. The date “3rd of the 3rd” (3-3) is symbolic of two ears! To coincide with this international annual event, the South African Association of Audiologists (SAAA) has declared the month of March as the annual ‘Hearing Awareness Month’ in South Africa. To this end, a concept entitled ‘Shake Your Sugar’ has been developed.

Hearing is an essential part of everyday life, depended on constantly by people at all ages. Hearing affects development, learning, communicating, working, health and quality of life.

Kelly Nathan, President of the SA Association of Audiologists (SAAA) states: *“Hearing impairment is considered the most prevalent form of impairment world-wide. Untreated hearing impairment, where applicable, is actually far-reaching which can **impact detrimentally on the quality of life** of those affected. Possible consequences include an inability to communicate effectively, delay in speech and language development in babies and young children, learning retardation and difficulties at school, isolation and stigmatisation. There are a number of medical conditions which can also aggravate the hearing impairment such as hypothyroidism, diabetes and HIV/Aids, amongst others.”*

Hearing loss may be inherited, caused by medical factors such as maternal rubella or complications at birth, certain infectious diseases such as meningitis, chronic ear infections, use of ototoxic drugs, trauma, exposure to excessive noise and ageing. Hearing loss can be present at birth (pre-lingual) or develop after spoken language has been acquired (post-lingual). **Approximately one-third of people over 65 years of age are affected by disabling hearing loss.**

Of significance is that **half of all cases of deafness and hearing impairment are avoidable** through primary prevention. Healthy ear and hearing care practices can suitably deal with early detection of hearing loss, followed by appropriate diagnosis and subsequent medical, rehabilitative or surgical interventions.

Not all persons with hearing loss will make use of a signed language as early identification and suitable amplification systems (hearing aids, bone anchored devices and cochlear implants) have made it possible to continue communicating through the auditory-verbal channel (spoken language).

What is the “Shake Your Sugar” concept?

The “Shake your Sugar” idea was conceived by Mariaan Botha, an audiologist enthusiastic about sharing her passion for sound, in an attempt to find a creative, quick, fun and non-threatening way of approaching the rather sensitive invisible issue of hearing loss and to create awareness for profession of Audiology.

Kelly Nathan, President of SAAA says: “ In general, there is a **great deal of misinformation and misperception** pertaining to hearing loss, often shrugged off by those affected initially as the inability of others to pronounce their words properly or excessive wax in their ears. In addition there is the fear of associated stigmatization and often denial.”

Nobody can “see” hearing loss by looking into your ear with an otoscope... your hearing has to be tested by an Audiologist with the suitable equipment! Yet audiology is a rather unknown profession! That is why loud noise, diabetes, kidney failure, ear infections and many other conditions cause hearing loss that go undetected for many years, silently interfering with your quality of life without you even realizing it!”

Shaking a sugar sachet (pre-packed sugar) creates a soft high pitched sound which is typical to the sound that disappears first in most types of hearing loss. Both ears should hear the sound at the same volume when shaken at arms’ length! You should also take note if the sounds change over time, don’t stop checking if you can hear it the first time!

It is important to note that ‘Shake Your Sugar’ has been developed as a hearing awareness campaign and it is **not to be regarded as a substitute for a comprehensive hearing test** in any way.

*The “Shake your Sugar” hearing awareness concept strives to **motivate the world to become positively passionate about sound while taking responsibility for your hearing at the same time!** It is independent of age, language or financial status. You can “shake your sugar” and then use it, making the concept **100% recyclable and diabetic friendly too (Don’t eat it, SHAKE it!).** We challenge you to not only shake your own sugar but also “shake your sugar” for someone else to show you care about their hearing ability as well. After all the sense of **hearing keeps us connected!***

For further information contact your local audiologist or the South African Association of Audiologists at www.audiologysa.co.za , admin@audiologysa.co.za or 0828554132.

Please join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/shakeyoursugar/ and follow SAAA on Twitter: www.twitter.com/SAAAudiologists for more information about the cash prizes sponsored by Widex for the “Shake your Sugar” social media competition that will run throughout March 2015.

(Poster attached)



Shake Your Sugar

Shake your sugar

IN SUPPORT OF HEARING AWARENESS



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For more information:
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Join us on Facebook / f:
Shake Your Sugar (SAAA)
World Health Organization (WHO)

In support of ICED (International Ear Care Day), brought to you by WHO (World Health Organisation).
www.who.int. **Shake Your Sugar** is an awareness campaign and not a substitute for a comprehensive hearing test. An SAAA initiative – project coordinator: Mariaan Botha

