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Title: Hearing deterioration in professional divers: an epidemiologic study

Authors: Molvaer, OI
Albrektsen, G

Keywords: noise
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Issue Date: 1990

Citation: Undersea Biomed Res. 1990 May; 17(3): 231-46.

Abstract: Hearing acuity was measured in 116 professional divers. After approximately 6 yr they were retested. At most frequencies, the divers had higher hearing thresholds than otologically normal subjects at the same age, both at the first and at the final examination. The divers' hearing deteriorated faster than that of the otologically normal subjects. The young divers' hearing thresholds were lower than in unscreened nondivers at comparable age, but the gap closed gradually with increasing age. Accordingly, the divers' hearing deteriorated faster than that of unscreened nondivers. Some of the divers had suffered permanent hearing loss from acute barotrauma. Considering the regular noise exposure during commercial diving, this must have contributed significantly to the observed hearing deterioration.

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