

# Hearing Tips During the Pandemic

by D. Kona Smith, Director, Ohana Hearing Care

This has been a tough year. Our lives have been disrupted at the least and dramatically changed at the worst by COVID-19. The effects are far-reaching and life-changing for us all—especially for our kūpuna.

For those with hearing problems, it's even more difficult to understand conversation when the speaker is wearing a mask. Voices become muffled and visual speech clues are hidden. Social distancing requires a separation of at least six feet, which makes it harder to communicate. The following are some tips for the kūpuna with hearing loss and their family and friends.

### Tips for kūpuna with hearing loss:

- Let the speaker know you have problems hearing.
- Ask the speaker to talk slower and louder so you are more likely to understand him or her.

### Tips for family and friends:

- Make sure you have the person's attention before you begin to speak.
- Never speak from another room or over a long distance.
- Ask a simple question to determine if you are being heard and understood. "Tūtū, can you understand me now?"
- Do not start speaking and then turn away. Always face the person you are talking to. ■



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# Battlefield Acupuncture for Pain

by Kathy K. Sato, Licensed Acupuncturist

Some of our best inventions come out of the military: the walkie-talkie (1930s), duct tape (1942) and "Battlefield Acupuncture" (2001).

Chronic pain is a serious problem for many of us, including combat veterans and soldiers. Unfortunately, pain medications, including opioids, often have limited efficacy and may impose adverse effects.

Acupuncture is known to provide immediate relief for acute and chronic pain without the risk of addiction. Dr. Richard Niemtzw, MD, has fine-tuned this idea by developing Battlefield Acupuncture (BFA), an acupuncture protocol in which needles are placed in the ear.

There are five points in this protocol: 1) Cingulate Gyrus, 2) Thalamus, 3) Omega 2, 4) Shen Men and 5) Point Zero. These points influence how the central nervous system processes pain.

It has been suggested that they elicit short-term analgesia or anti-inflammatory cytokines for long-term effects. BFA has been proven effective for immediate pain reduction.

Little gold semi-permanent needles are left to fall out on their own in a few days. But conventional acupuncture needles can work, too. This protocol is a quick and effective way of managing pain. ■



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