

Bundled Vs Unbundled Hearing Aid Pricing

Historically audiologists sold hearing aids using a single price, bundled, that reflected the cost of the hearing aids and the services to fit including follow-up and routine service. It was easy for the consumer to understand that after purchasing hearing aids, all their follow-up and services were included in the single price for the life of the fitting. The average life of a hearing aid fitting is five to seven years. During the last 5 years, insurance companies asked audiologists to unbundle hearing aid pricing. Unbundled pricing means individual charges for hearing aid evaluation, hearing instruments, fitting, and follow-up and service. While this might not sound like a big deal, patients accustomed to paying only one time for their hearing aid find unbundling confusing.

When you arrive at the office for the first time, the audiologist performs a series of diagnostic tests to determine the reason for your understanding or listening difficulties. After testing, the audiologist explains the results. If you need amplification to improve your speech understanding, the audiologist schedules a hearing aid evaluation. A good hearing aid evaluation guarantees a problem free hearing aid fitting.

Bundled Pricing

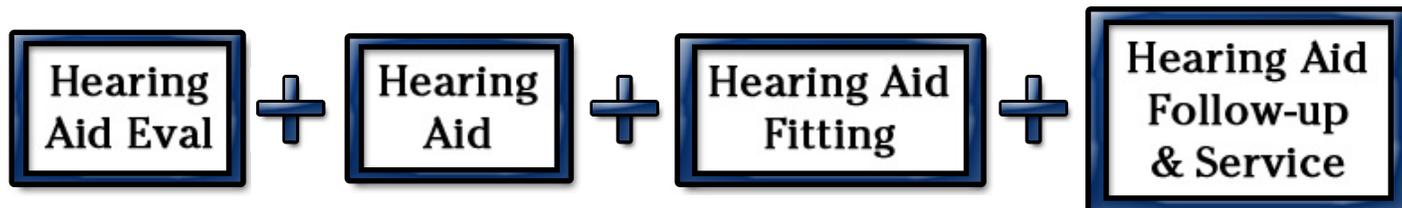
During the hearing aid evaluation, you learn about technology and which products work best for you. When ordering hearing aids, the audiologist quotes a single price for the hearing aids. This price includes the hearing aid evaluation, hearing aids, fitting, follow-ups, and service. The service continues for the life of the hearing aid fitting. You never pay for an office visit related to care or service of your hearing aids for as long as you have them. If you have an insurance benefit for hearing aids, it is rare for the insurance benefit to cover all costs. It's common for you to add money out-of-pocket to pay the difference.



With bundled pricing there is one price for all components of the hearing aid purchase

Unbundled Pricing

Unbundling assigns individual fees for the hearing aid evaluation, hearing aids, hearing aid fitting, and follow-up and service. Each item is billed separately when it occurs. In addition, after the fitting, you usually have several scheduled follow-ups and annual service. You pay a fee each time you visit the office for follow-up and service. Unbundling lowers your initial cost because you are not paying for a lifetime of follow-



With unbundled pricing, each part of the fitting is charge separately

up and service. If you exhaust your insurance benefit before the hearing aids need replacement, you pay for the follow-up and service.

What's Best, Bundled or Unbundled?

Bundled pricing is preferred by most experienced hearing aid users. In our office, bundled pricing includes semi-annual check-ups, and hearing retested every two years. If your hearing changes significantly, then your hearing aids need reprogramming. Whenever you have a problem, just pick up the phone and schedule a time for service. Usually we see you the same day. Hearing aid users with bundled pricing never worry about the fees for these services because they were included in the pricing. For many hearing aid users, bundled pricing is less expensive over the life of the hearing aid system. With bundled pricing, I'm assured that the cost of the office visit is never the reason you don't call if you're having an issue with your hearing aids.

Unbundled pricing is required by some insurance companies, and some hearing aid users prefer it. With unbundling, you pay less for the hearing aid up-front, but pay for follow-up and services as you consume them throughout the life of your fitting. Unbundled pricing mimics how you consume most professional and medical services. You pay as you go.

We dispense hearing aids using both methods. Since we provide both methods, you choose the system you think works best for you.



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