

Dr Gian Peider Anderhub:

The first Sonetik customer to change to the new GOhear-in.

Dr Anderhub has been using Sonetik hearing aids for the last four years and has put the new Sonetik GOhear-in hearing aids to the test for us. In the following interview, he tells us how it went:



We would like to thank you for taking the time to answer our questions. Please could you briefly introduce yourself?

I am a retired doctor and I live in Engadin. I like photography and going for walks with my two dogs.

Why did you first decide to start wearing Sonetik hearing aids?

My wife was constantly having to ask me to turn the TV down. I realised that I was missing a lot in conversations and was always having to ask for things to be repeated. "What did you say?" was a common expression in our house. But I still wasn't sure myself whether I needed hearing aids. Hearing problems were never really an important issue when I was out walking in the countryside with my dogs and I rarely felt restricted by my hearing. Nevertheless, after some persuasion from my wife, I registered with a hearing clinic. After waiting a number of weeks for an appointment, I eventually got to speak to somebody who was able to advise me. However, I didn't receive the hearing aid straight away, but instead had to wait another three weeks for the follow-up consultation. It was only then that I was given a hearing aid to trial, but somehow I didn't get along with it and ended up taking it back three weeks later because I was dissatisfied. Another factor was the high price – several thousand francs, which came as quite a shock.

In the end, a friend told me about Sonetik and their more reasonably priced hearing aids. I was also really impressed that you could simply buy them from the pharmacy without weeks of waiting for the hearing clinic. My hearing was tested at the pharmacy using a hearing curve and a hearing aid was then recommended to me. This lasted approximately thirty to forty minutes. The cost was CHF 495

per hearing aid.

What experience have you had with the GOhear hearing aids?

I have been using the GOhear hearing aids from Sonetik for about four years now. At first of course, they took some getting used to. I firstly had to work out which profile was the correct one for me, depending on the acoustic environment (the hearing aid has four profiles), and I generally had to get used to there being "something" in my ear – you hardly notice that it is an actual hearing aid. In fact, the hearing aids are so discreet that you can almost forget to take them out when you go swimming or have a shower. I have now started to notice an incredible difference between wearing the hearing aids and not wearing them, particularly as I am now able to ask my wife to turn the TV down. Even out in the countryside, for example, you can hear the birds calling again, you notice the crunching of gravel under your feet and the rushing of the stream. However, without hearing aids, I now feel as if I am standing behind a thick soundproof wall. If I am watching TV and I remove the hearing aids, it is as if somebody has pulled the plug. It's like sudden deafness. During conversations, I no longer have to constantly ask for things to be repeated or make a funnel with my hands behind my ears to help me understand what is being said. Certain difficulties arise in loud public places where there is a significant amount of background noise. In these situations, understanding everyone can occasionally become tricky. However, friends with much more expensive hearing aids have the same issues. Certain physical characteristics obviously remain the same, regardless of price.

What are the advantages of buying hearing aids from a pharmacy?

When I think back on my experience of the long-winded and time consuming sales method at the hearing clinic, the straightforward, uncomplicated process at the pharmacy with a medically trained advisor is a blessing. Maximum efficiency from investing a minimal amount of time. And financially it is also a lot cheaper. After approximately half an hour, you leave the pharmacy with "new ears" at an acceptable price. As I experienced the alternative option via the hearing clinic first hand, I can safely say that the end result of this more time consuming and costly option does not justify the additional expense. After all, I can get to Bern just as quickly and relatively comfortably in a normal, mid-range car as I can in a Bentley.

What do you think of the new GOhear-in hearing aids?

A few months ago, I had the opportunity to test the new GOhear-in aids. At first of course, I was somewhat sceptical and found it hard to imagine simply placing the bud in my ear. However, I very quickly got used to the feeling of wearing them, which is completely different from before. No more tubes behind my ears or having the devices slipping out or falling off when getting undressed. Total independence. My initial concern that the small buds could fall out during exercise proved to be completely unfounded. They stay in place even under the greatest strain. The hearing aids adapt entirely to the individual. You practically forget they are there. There is no annoying sensation of a foreign object at all; no feeling of pressure.

How did you find changing from the GOhear to the GOhear-in?

Although I was already satisfied with the GOhear hearing aids, with the GOhear-in aids I now have the feeling of total freedom. Nobody can see that I'm wearing a hearing aid. I feel completely unrestricted and free and I hear what I need to. I also noticed a marked improvement with regard to quality. They work perfectly for day to day use – good audibility, clear sound. Performance in noisy environments was also even better and more pleasant than with the GOhear aids. Inserting and removing them proved to be even easier and managing them was similarly straightforward.

What do the people you know say about hearing aids and Sonetik?

When talking to friends as well as hearing aid users, the price was obviously always the main point of discussion. In contrast to judgements about quality, there are no subjective interpretations when it comes to this topic. Money is money! In general, with most users I think I have noticed certain reservations due to price. However, the argument "you get what you pay for" appeared to prevail and somewhat outweigh all the other positive aspects of Sonetik hearing aids. People can't, or rather simply don't want to believe that hearing aids which cost several thousand francs can be just as good as a cheaper competitor. Especially when you consider that manufacturing one of these hearing aids probably costs barely more than one to two hundred francs, but the hearing clinic is reliant on selling them at a profit. There seems to be real potential to make savings here, for which quality does not need to be compromised.

Would you recommend Sonetik hearing aids and if so, who would you recommend should use the GOhear hearing aid and who should use the GOhear-in hearing aid?

Obviously I recommend the GOhear aids to all of my friends as a good and affordable way to improve hearing. Although they are somewhat more expensive, I am equally happy to recommend the new GOhear-in aids. And having got used to them, I now find it rather difficult to define who should wear the more attractively priced behind-the-ear hearing aids. I think that they are perhaps appropriate for people who are sceptical and need to be convinced of the value of a hearing aid – as a sort of entry level product. However, I have to highly recommend the GOhear-in aids for anyone else with hearing loss. Small, elegant and effective – as things stand, I see them as the benchmark for competitor models. When it comes to quality and price, the GOhear-in hearing aids seem to me to be the best option.