

Turn it Down! Loud Sounds not Music for Ears

New Delhi: Dancing may help you de-stress, but here's something to look out for: the loud music.

A new study conducted by the charity RNID in the UK suggests that after a night out, an overwhelming 90 per cent of 16 to 30-year-olds experience symptoms of hearing damage, dullness of hearing or ringing in the ears.

Researchers surveyed more than 1,300 people, more than half of whom had visited a bar where they had to shout to be heard.

“If the ear is exposed to more than 80-90 decibels of sound for more than six-eight hours, it can have a damaging effect. However, a short exposure of even about 10 seconds at 140 decibels like a bomb blast can be equally damaging. The cochlea in the ear gets damaged due to loud music,” says Dr Ameet Kishore, ENT specialist at Apollo Hospital.

But you don't need to pack away your party clothes just yet. Here's what you can do to avoid ear damage whether you are a regular clubber, or a DJ:

- * Take regular breaks from the dance floor in nightclubs
- * Give your ears a break from the loud music every two-three hours
- * Don't stand close to speakers at clubs or concerts
- * Wear ear plugs if regularly exposed to loud music

But it's not just clubs, portable music has its flip side as well. “While using ear plugs, you are getting concentrated sound without any escape. It seems likely that for the same decibel level you are going to get much more loud noise into your ears if you were to use headsets,” said Dr Kishore.

It may not necessarily sound like something you want to hear, but the fact is regular exposure to music at high volumes could damage your hearing forever.