



Men's Health Week

Eyes, Ears, and Mouth – More Than Just Senses

For Tasmania's Emergency Services

When you think of staying healthy, your heart, muscles, or waistline might come to mind. But what about your **eyes, ears, and mouth**? These parts of your body don't just help you experience the world – they're also closely linked to your overall health, safety, and ability to do your job.

Let's break down why your **senses and oral health matter**, and what you can do to look after them.



Eye Health – See It Coming

From reading fine print on incident reports to scanning bushfire terrain, your vision is critical – no matter your role.

COMMON ISSUES IN MEN OVER 30:

- Digital eye strain from screens
- Presbyopia (age-related long-sightedness)
- Dry eyes (especially from air-conditioned or smoky environments)
- Sun damage (UV exposure increases the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration)

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Get your eyes tested **every 2 years** (or yearly if over 50)
- Wear **UV-protective sunglasses** outdoors
- Use **artificial tears** if working in dry environments
- Take **screen breaks** – 20 seconds every 20 minutes
- Know the signs: blurry vision, headaches, squinting, floaters

Did you know? Some eye conditions, like glaucoma, have **no early symptoms** – regular testing is the only way to catch them early.

Ear Health – Listen Up

Emergency sirens, radios, machinery, and even loud office environments can damage your hearing over time.

HEARING LOSS CAN AFFECT:

- **Situational awareness**
- **Communication on the job**
- **Mental health** (linked to increased risk of depression and cognitive decline)

PROTECT YOUR EARS:

- Use **ear protection** around loud equipment
- Avoid cranking up headphones to drown out noise
- Get a **hearing check every 1–2 years**, especially if exposed to high decibels
- Look out for **tinnitus (ringing in the ears)** – an early warning sign

Hearing loss doesn't just “happen to old blokes.” It often starts gradually in your 30s or 40s if exposed to regular noise.

Oral Health – More Than Just a Smile

Poor oral health can affect more than just your teeth. Gum disease has been linked to **heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and even respiratory infections**. Plus, dental pain can affect sleep, concentration, and nutrition – none of which are helpful when you're in the middle of a 12-hour shift.

ORAL HEALTH TIPS:

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss or use interdental brushes daily
- Avoid sugary snacks, energy drinks, and acidic soft drinks
- Drink plenty of water (especially after coffee or meals)
- Visit the dentist **once a year**, even if nothing hurts

Small issues like bleeding gums or bad breath can be early signs of **periodontal disease** – don't ignore them.



Why It All Matters

Your senses and oral health:

- Help keep you **safe and aware**
- Affect your **mental clarity and energy**
- Influence your **communication and confidence**
- Are connected to **other chronic health conditions**

Senses & Oral Health Self-Check

- Can you read road signs clearly or do you feel eye strain often?
- Do you ask people to repeat themselves or do you notice ringing in your ears?
- Have you skipped the dentist this year? Are your gums bleeding when brushing?
- Do you protect your eyes/ears at work as much as your skin or back?

Practical Tools

- Book a **combined optometrist and hearing test** – both are often bulk-billed
- Chat to your dentist about a **preventive care plan**
- Ask your workplace about **PPE for eyes and ears**
- Download the **SoundCheck Australia** app to screen your hearing

Resources

- **Optometry Australia** – optometry.org.au
- **Hearing Australia** – hearing.com.au
- **Australian Dental Association** – ada.org.au

Final Word:

Don't Wait Until It Hurts

Eyes, ears, and teeth are often overlooked until something goes wrong. But a few small checks and habits can keep you sharper, safer, and stronger on and off duty. This Men's Health Week, keep your senses in check – they're your frontline tools, too.



Visit www.mypulse.com.au
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