

# ***Disability* uditiva in rapporto alla soglia audiometrica: ipotesi sulla determinazione di insorgenza dell'indebolimento del senso dell'udito**

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## **KEY WORDS**

Noise-induced hearing loss; auditory disability; pure-tone audiometry

## **SUMMARY**

**«Auditory disability in relation to audiometric threshold values: a proposal for determining onset of hearing loss».** **Background.** *The term auditory disability (AD) means the presence of auditory symptoms due to hearing loss. Until now the audiometric threshold cut-off between the presence or absence of AD was not clear.* **Objectives.** *In this study we attempted to define the value of audiometric threshold that could be considered as the limit between the presence or absence of weakness of auditory function, considered as the threshold at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of subjects that did not report AD.* **Methods.** *The study group consisted of 1641 males, 891 normally hearing and 750 affected by noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). Each subject was submitted to a questionnaire specifically created in order to determine the presence of AD.* **Results.** *Statistical analysis confirmed the reliability of answers to items. AD was present in 577 subjects, not all affected by NIHL. Audiometric threshold and age correlated significantly with the degree of AD.* **Conclusions.** *The results obtained allowed the audiometric threshold values to be determined at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of subjects who did not report AD, in relation to the average of frequencies normally used in hearing loss evaluation.*