Summary of NIHL studies concerning music majors
Gretchen Lee
MuEd 545, Spring 2011

2008 study conducted at UNC at Greensboro (Phillips & Mace)
- Used DoseBadges to measure average decibel levels in practice rooms and a daily percentage based on NIOSH recommendations (over 100% = maximum daily noise recommendation has been exceeded)
- All 50 of the undergraduate music majors participating in the study experienced levels above 85 dB, the threshold for a potentially damaging level of sound

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument group</th>
<th>Average dB level</th>
<th>Est. dose for 3 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brass</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>180%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>string</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woodwind</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>130.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>121%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sound levels in orchestra (Toppila, Koskinien, & Pyykko, 2011)
- Typical sound levels in string sections are 86-91 dB
- 90-94 dB in woodwind sections, 83-94 dB in brass sections
- Up to 98 dB in percussion sections” (p.45)
- Time spent in rehearsals can significantly contribute to the maximum allowable noise exposure per day
- Example: a string player who has already spent three hours in a practice room playing at an average level of 87 dB, then goes to a two hour orchestra rehearsal at an average level of 88 dB has exceeded 100 percent of the maximum recommended daily sound exposure level

Go to the audiology lab and get your hearing tested— I did!
- Doesn’t take long (1 hr.)
- Much more thorough than the hearing test in the doctor’s office
- Gives you a baseline in case you have hearing problems in the future