



Media Information

August 9, 2018

About the new Phonak Virto™ B-Titanium hearing aid

The small and discreet Virto B-Titanium custom hearing aid becomes even tinier and more discreet thanks to a new tool for hearing care professionals called the Titanium FitGuide.

Summary

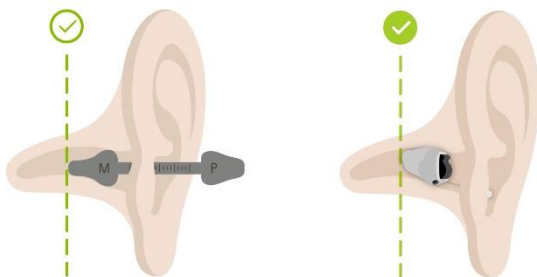
In February of 2017, Phonak announced production of the Virto B-Titanium hearing aid. Virto B-Titanium remains the world's only mainstream custom hearing aid made of premium medical-grade titanium. Virto B-Titanium combines the many benefits of titanium—including superior strength and an extra light weight—together with the latest 3D printing technology.

The Virto B-Titanium is the smallest and most discreet custom hearing aid Phonak has ever produced. Compared to traditional acrylic, titanium shells are 15X stronger and 50% thinner. A thinner shell allows for deeper placement in the ear canal, resulting in a more discreet fit. This makes Virto B-Titanium an ideal solution for first-time hearing aid wearers, 62% of whom prefer an invisible hearing aid.¹

Virto B-Titanium also provides outstanding hearing performance. It contains AutoSense OS for a fully automatic and effortless listening experience. AutoSense OS accurately captures and analyzes the sound environment, then precisely blends feature elements from multiple programs in real time. When compared to manual programs, use of AutoSense OS improves speech understanding by 20% in everyday listening situations.^{2,3}

Virto B-Titanium achieved an IP68 rating for resistance to both water and dust and was recently honored as a 2018 Red Dot Award Winner for excellence in product design.

The Challenge



The engineers at Phonak were challenged with making the tiny Virto B-Titanium even tinier and more discreet. They decided to focus on how to increase “ear candidacy” for the product, which ultimately led them to re-examine the ear impression-taking process. Traditional ear impressions typically only involve injecting impression material into the ear canal. Unfortunately, ear impressions are static and an impression alone does not take into account the natural flexibility of the ear canal.

Enter the Titanium FitGuide, a new tool for hearing care professionals (HCPs) that has been proven to give more than 50% of patients a deeper fitting by an average of 2.5mm.³ The tool is made of pure medical-grade titanium and has two modular ends—one for patients who require a moderate receiver

and another for those who need a power receiver. The HCP inserts the appropriate module into the patient's ear to reach a depth that is both deep but comfortable. The HCP notes the depth in millimeters, which is etched onto the stem of the tool.



In addition to the Titanium FitGuide, professionals may also use the 2018 Red Dot Award-winning EasyView Otoblock when taking an impression for the Virto B-Titanium. The EasyView Otoblock provides visualization for the deepest ear impression possible. Along with the availability of this deep impression, the additional data gained from the Titanium FitGuide ensures Phonak's 3D modelers build the smallest, most discreet Virto B-Titanium.

The new and improved Virto B-Titanium will be available August 27 in 17 countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States) with two additional module colors and new venting options.

For further information, visit www.phonak.com or www.phonakpro.com.

¹ Knor, H. (2016) Sonova B2C consumer segmentation. Jan 2016, #668, N2456, GER, USA, CHN, FRA.

² Rakita, L., & Jones, C. (2015). Performance and Preference of an Automatic Hearing Aid System in Real-World Listening Environments. *Hearing Review*, 22(12):28.

³ Searchfield, G., Linford, T., Kobayashi, K., Crowhen, D., and Latzel, M. (2017). The performance of an automatic acoustic-based program classifier compared to hearing aid users' manual selection of listening programs. *International Journal of Audiology*, 1-12.

⁴ Bishop, R., Stewart, E., & Loyola, N. (2018). Titanium FitGuide – helping more than 50% of people get an even more discreet Virto B-Titanium. Phonak Field Study News, retrieved from www.phonakpro.com/evidence, accessed August 9th, 2018.

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About Phonak

Headquartered near Zurich, Switzerland, Phonak, a member of the Sonova Group, was created in 1947 out of a passion for taking on the most difficult hearing challenges. Seventy years later, this passion remains. As the industry's leading innovator, we offer the broadest portfolio of life-changing hearing solutions. From pediatric to

profound hearing loss, we remain committed to creating hearing solutions that change people's lives to thrive socially and emotionally. We believe in creating a world where 'Life is on' for everyone.

At Phonak, we believe that hearing well is essential to living life to the fullest. For more than 70 years, we have remained true to our mission by developing pioneering hearing solutions that change people's lives to thrive socially and emotionally. **Life is on.**