

TINNITUS – PATIENT EDUCATION MATERIAL

WHAT IS TINNITUS?

Tinnitus is a condition in which you hear noise in one or both of your ears. It could be ringing, buzzing, or pulsating. It is common, usually harmless, and often goes away on its own. The exact cause can't always be found. It frequently happens after you have been exposed to a loud noise. Sometimes it relates to hearing loss.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME?

Tinnitus is usually nothing to worry about, but sometimes it requires medical attention. If it lasts for a long time or if it significantly affects your everyday life, your doctor can help you assess the best possible approach for your situation.

WHICH SUPPORT/THERAPIES COULD HELP ME WITH MY CONDITION?

Cognitive-behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a type of talking therapy where a therapist helps you to change the way you think and behave about noise in your ears.

Audiotherapy is a type of therapy that uses sound to distract you from noise in your ears, or to make you get used to that noise, and to eventually be able to ignore it.

Hearing aids help in a similar way to audiotherapy, by amplifying external noise, your brain gets distracted or used to the noise from your ears.

Lifestyle modification:

- living healthier
- prioritizing good night's sleep
- relaxation
- healthy eating habits
- spending time with people you love
- exercise

WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY?

In rare cases, there may be some other problems that occur together with tinnitus. If they occur, you should contact a medical professional as soon as possible. Those problems are:

- balance loss or dizziness
- vision loss
- face dropping on one side
- arm or leg weakness or numbness
- speech difficulties
- recent head or neck injury
- thoughts of harming oneself or others
- tinnitus that pulses in rhythm with your heartbeat
- ear pain
- liquid draining from your ear
- sudden hearing loss

References:

1. Henry, J.A., Zaugg, T.L., Myers, P.J., Kendall C.J., Michaelides E.M. A triage guide for tinnitus. The Journal of Family Practice. 2010;59(7): 389-393.
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2. Sound Therapy. Tinnitus UK. <https://tinnitus.org.uk/support-for-you/what-can-i-do/sound-therapy/> Accessed October 23, 2025