

Tinnitus

Tinnitus is the perception of sound when no corresponding environmental sounds exists.

It usually sounds like ringing, clicking or hissing in your ears. Tinnitus is equally common in men and women and its prevalence increases with age (it occasionally affects children and is becoming prominent among teenagers - 17% of students now experience tinnitus or ringing in the ears according to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association). According to the American Tinnitus Association, at least 12 million Americans have tinnitus and 1 million of these experience it so severely that it interferes with their daily activities (hearing, working or sleeping).

What causes Tinnitus?

Hearing Loss

Different kinds of hearing loss, including age related hearing loss, can cause tinnitus.

Loud Noise

Too much exposure to loud noise can cause noise induced hearing loss and tinnitus.

Medicine

More than 200 medicines can cause tinnitus.

Other Health Problems

Allergies, tumors and problems in the heart and blood vessels, jaws and neck can cause tinnitus.

How will hearing experts treat my tinnitus?

Although there is no cure for tinnitus, scientists and doctors have discovered several treatments that may provide relief.

Maskers

Maskers are electronic devices that use sound to make tinnitus less noticeable. Maskers do not make tinnitus go away, but they are very effective in making the ringing or roaring sound far less noticeable.

Sound Oasis sound therapy systems are the finest tinnitus masking devices in the world.

Hearing Aids

Many people with tinnitus also have hearing loss. Wearing a hearing aid may allow you to hear the sounds you want to hear better (e.g. talking, music, etc.) rather than your tinnitus.

Medicine

Some medicines may ease tinnitus. Some typical tinnitus medicines are:

Sonarx <http://www.sonarx.greatnow.com/>

Arches Tinnitus Relief <http://www.wholehealth.com/>

*If your doctor prescribes medicine to treat your tinnitus, he or she can tell you whether the medicine has any side effects.

Tinnitus Retraining Therapy

This treatment uses a combination of counseling and masking devices. Otolaryngologists and audiologists help you learn how to deal with your tinnitus better. You may also use masking devices to make your tinnitus less noticeable. After a while, some people learn how to avoid thinking about their tinnitus. It takes time for this treatment to work, but it can be very helpful.

Counseling

This treatment uses a combination of counseling and masking devices. Otolaryngologists and audiologists help you learn how to deal with your tinnitus better. You may also use masking devices to make your tinnitus less noticeable. After a while, some people learn how to avoid thinking about their tinnitus. It takes time for this treatment to work, but it can be very helpful.

Relaxing

People with tinnitus may become depressed. Talking with a counselor or people in tinnitus support groups may be helpful.

Where can I find more information?

The following groups can provide additional information on tinnitus:

Newspapers

Turn Off the Ringing Sound - Wall Street Journal, Dec 12, 2010

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748703727804576017473782047928>

If there's ringing in your ears, you're not alone - Toronto Globe & Mail, Jan 3, 2011

