

# Tinnitus education for patients

## What is that sound in your ears?

Many people experience tinnitus as a ringing in their head or ears, but it can take a variety of forms. You might experience it as a buzzing, humming or whistling sound. Some people even describe it as the sensation of a roaring ocean.

It can be constant or intermittent and you may experience it in one ear or both. Tinnitus may even wake you up when you are asleep.

For the vast majority of people, tinnitus is a subjective sound, which means that only the person who has it can hear it. It can be soft or loud. Tinnitus originates inside the head and the onset may be gradual or sudden.



## Your health and your goals

Although tinnitus is a common condition, the causes and symptoms vary. It is crucial to understand that each tinnitus case is unique and requires a personalized treatment plan. We firmly believe that the best tinnitus treatment plan begins with a consultation with a hearing care professional.

## What causes tinnitus?

Tinnitus is a symptom, not a disease. Although there are many possible causes, some people can develop tinnitus for no apparent reason.



Exposure to loud sounds



Injuries to the head or neck



Natural aging process



Reaction to medication



Sudden impact noises



Emotional distress

## What does tinnitus have to do with hearing loss?

90%

Tinnitus and hearing loss often co-exist. An estimated 90% of tinnitus sufferers experience some degree of hearing loss. Some people with tinnitus may think their trouble hearing is caused by the tinnitus, but in fact, it can be due to hearing loss. The hearing loss is often caused by damaged hair cells in the inner ear.

Hearing aids are helpful for many people who have tinnitus. The more you hear, the less you may notice your tinnitus. With hearing aids, your brain has other sounds to listen to, making your tinnitus less noticeable.



If you have tinnitus symptoms, a hearing evaluation is recommended. You may want to bring a spouse or another close family member, as they can be an important source of support.

# Gaining control, finding relief

Our goal is to help you understand and gain control of your tinnitus, rather than letting it take control over you. There is no cure for tinnitus. Yet understanding tinnitus, and how to manage it, are the first steps in taking back control.

No single approach works for everyone. You may need to try different combinations of techniques before you find out what works best for you.

## The benefits of sound

You may find that listening to different types of sound can move your attention away from your tinnitus and provide relief. This is what your audiologist will refer to as sound therapy or a treatment plan.

This may include:



**Oticon hearing aids:** small devices for the ears that amplify sound. More sound makes your tinnitus stand out less. Oticon hearing aids\* can be used for tinnitus management treatment plans.



**Nature sounds and music:** can reduce the contrast between tinnitus and quiet environments.



**Combination devices:** hearing aids with built-in sound generators that emit specific tinnitus relief sounds. Oticon hearing aids\* offer Tinnitus SoundSupport™ which provides different sounds that can be modified to suit your needs.



**Audio books:** can for some, provide just the right mix of sound, brain stimulation, and comfort.

\*Not available for Oticon Play PX, Opn Play™, Xceed Play and select custom Oticon Own™, Opn™ and Siya aids.

## Additional solutions

Evidence suggests that the following solutions can also have a positive effect on your tinnitus.



**Relaxation and mindfulness:** Yoga and meditation have proven to be particularly effective tools of relief.



**A healthy diet** and exercising can have a positive impact on your life.



**Wear hearing protection** when you find yourself in loud environments or in close proximity to other noise producing devices such as power tools or lawnmowers.



**Sound generator** is a stand-alone device for your bedside that can play various sounds to reduce tinnitus.



**Thinking positively:** Negative or angry feelings can make tinnitus seem worse. Focus on the things and sounds that make you happy.



**Maintaining good sleep practices:** Try to keep a regular bedtime routine and avoid big meals, alcohol, caffeine, and exercise before sleeping.

## Useful resources:

**American Tinnitus Association**  
[www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)

**Tinnitus First Aid Kit**  
[www.tinnituskit.com](http://www.tinnituskit.com)