

Treatments Options for Tinnitus

From the website of American Tinnitus Association

www.ata.org

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Treatments are presented alphabetically, not in any order. Please note that neither ATA nor Dr. Namdar recommend or endorse any product or treatment. You must decide with a qualified health professional what treatment is right for you. When trying any new treatment keep in mind that many therapies require an investment of time and personal effort to be most effective. Also, some patients find that a combination of treatments can be more beneficial than a single therapy.

Alternative Treatments

Minerals such as magnesium or zinc, herbal preparations such as Ginkgo biloba, homeopathic remedies, or B vitamins are sometimes prescribed for relieving tinnitus. Procedures such as acupuncture, cranio-sacral therapy, magnets, hyperbaric oxygen, or hypnosis are also occasionally tried. Your doctor might give you clearance to try them for tinnitus given that they generally carry little risk to health.

Amplification (Hearing Aids)

Some tinnitus patients with hearing loss experience total or partial tinnitus relief while wearing hearing aids. There are many variables that determine success. However, if a patient has a hearing loss in the frequency range of the tinnitus, hearing aids may bring back in the ambient sounds that naturally cover the tinnitus.

Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a relaxation technique that teaches people to control certain autonomic body functions, such as pulse, muscle tension, and skin temperature. The goal of biofeedback is to help people manage stress in their lives not by reducing the stress but by changing the body's reaction to it.

Cochlear Implants/Electrical Stimulation

A cochlear implant has two components: 1) an electrode array that is threaded into the cochlea, and 2) a receiver that is implanted just beneath the skin behind the ear. The electrode array sends electrical sound signals from the ear to the brain. Because electrode implantation destroys whatever healthy hair cells were left inside the cochlea, these implants are prescribed

to deaf or near-deaf patients only. In one study, half of those who had tinnitus before their cochlear implants experienced tinnitus relief after their cochlear implants.

Why do cochlear implants help tinnitus? There are two possible reasons: 1) The tinnitus might be masked by the ambient sounds that these devices bring back in. 2) The tinnitus might be suppressed by the electrical stimulation sent through the auditory nerve by the implant. Some forms of electrical stimulation to the ear can stop tinnitus briefly.

Cognitive Behavioral and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of counseling that is based on treating a patient's emotional reaction to tinnitus rather than the tinnitus itself. To accomplish this desired change in perception, a counselor will help the patient identify negative behaviors and thought patterns, then alter them. Counseling programs are individually designed for patients and are most effective when coupled with other tinnitus treatments, such as masking or medication. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a common form of complementary medicine addressing both physical health and emotional wellbeing that has shown benefit in relieving tinnitus in some sufferers.

Drug Therapy

Many drugs have been researched and studied in an attempt to relieve tinnitus. Presently, there is no known drug or medication that has been clinically shown to eliminate tinnitus. The American Tinnitus Association cannot recommend which treatment, drug or otherwise, is right for you. This is for you and your health care provider to determine. For information on drugs that have been studied for tinnitus [click here](#).

Sound Therapy

Various treatment strategies utilize sound to decrease the loudness or prominence of tinnitus. Sound therapies can include both wearable (hearing aid-like devices) and non-wearable devices (such as table-top sound machines or even a whirring fan). Often, sound, like white noise, is used to completely or partially cover the tinnitus. Some people refer to this covering of sound as masking. Sound therapies, in general, are most effective when combined with a form of counseling. ATA members have reported the sounds of rain, waterfall, crickets, birds chirping, or even dogs panting, provide some distraction from their tinnitus.

TMJ Treatment

Tinnitus can be a symptom of a jaw joint dysfunction (temporomandibular joint, or TMJ). Dental treatment or bite realignment can help relieve TMJ pain and associated tinnitus. Visit your dentist if you think you have TMJ. In addition to audiologists and ENTs, ATA's health provider listing also has many qualified TMJ treatment professionals with expertise in treating TMJ-related tinnitus.