



Tips for Managing Tinnitus

Diagnose and Understand Your Tinnitus

1. DO NOT panic. Tinnitus is usually not a sign of a serious, ongoing medical condition.
2. CHECK things out. The sounds you hear may actually be normal sounds created by the human body at work.
3. SEE an audiologist or ear, nose and throat specialist (ENT) interested and experienced in tinnitus treatment.
4. REVIEW your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins and other supplements) with your medical professional to find possible causes of your tinnitus.
5. BE WARY of a hopeless diagnosis or physician advice like, "There's nothing you can do about your tinnitus. Go home and live with it."
6. BE a detective. Keep track of what triggers your tinnitus.
7. KEEP UP TO DATE about tinnitus. More and more research by the best and the brightest is bringing us closer to successful treatments and cures for tinnitus.

Take Care of Yourself

1. BE KIND to yourself. Developing tinnitus means you have undergone a significant physical, emotional and maybe even life-style change.
2. EXAMINE how you live to find ways to eliminate or reduce some stress in different parts of your life; stress often makes tinnitus worse.
3. PAY ATTENTION to what you eat. One-by-one, eliminate possible sources of tinnitus aggravation, e.g., salt, artificial sweeteners, sugar, alcohol, prescription or over-the-counter medications, tobacco and caffeine. (Do not stop taking medications without consulting with your health care professional.)
4. DON'T GIVE UP on a treatment if it doesn't work right away. Some can take quite a while to have a positive effect.
5. PROTECT YOURSELF from further auditory damage by avoiding loud places and by using earplugs when you can't avoid loud noise.

Your Attitude Matters

1. DO NOT create any negative forecasts for your tinnitus, such as "This is never going to get any better." Counting on a better future can help you create one.
2. TAKE HEART. In many cases people with tinnitus "habituate" to it, meaning they get used to it and notice it less than at first.
3. BE INVOLVED in your recovery. Consider yourself part of your treatment team where your thoughts and feelings should count.
4. DO NOT WASTE time blaming yourself for your tinnitus. The causes of tinnitus are varied and difficult to determine.

Line Up Support

1. LOCATE people who understand your struggles and learn that you are not alone. Have people in your life who, though they cannot "see" or "hear" your tinnitus, understand that you have it.
2. FIND a support group that will truly understand your struggles with tinnitus and help you sort out useful from useless information. You will find compassion, companionship and coping strategies.
3. EDUCATE your family, friends and co-workers about tinnitus; tell them about the conditions and settings that are difficult for you; and ask them for their support.
4. CONTINUE SEEKING reliable information from credible sources.

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Tinnitus Tips

Aggravators

- Multiple things we encounter in our daily routine can aggravate tinnitus. The following is a list of possible aggravators of tinnitus:
 - Stress
 - Noise exposure (e.g. from shooting firearms or machines at work)
 - Nicotine intake
 - Alcohol consumption
 - Caffeine intake
 - Salt intake
 - Certain medications (e.g. aspirin – see ototoxic drugs)
- In order to avoid aggravating your tinnitus, these items should be eliminated to see if it has a positive effect.

Apps

- Apps are available for your smartphone or tablet that produce a variety of sounds to help relieve tinnitus and can be used with or without hearing devices to provide relief.
 - *Oticon Tinnitus Sound*
 - *Phonak Tinnitus Balance*
 - *Starkey Relax*
 - *Widex Zen Tinnitus*
 - *Resound Relief*

Other Resources

- The American Tinnitus Association
 - <https://www.ata.org/>



Tinnitus Retraining Therapy Strategies

- 1. To help with Tinnitus don't attach negative associations to your Tinnitus.**
 - The more you think about it, the worse you can make it.
- 2. Avoid silence.**
 - When it's quiet you will be able to perceive your tinnitus easier.
- 3. Listen to APPEALING background sounds, while still being able to slightly hear your Tinnitus.**
 - Your brain over time will be able to habituate to your Tinnitus.
- 4. Main take home message is that there is no cure for Tinnitus!**

However, if you follow the strategies listed above your brain will be able to decrease the neuronal activity caused by the Autonomic and Limbic systems.

 - **This will not happen overnight!** It can take up to 6 months to one year to start to experience relief from your Tinnitus.
 - There is no magic pill, or remedy that cures Tinnitus, so don't waste your time and money on these fictitious remedies.