



Ear, Nose, Throat

Sinus, Allergy, Audiology

Snoring & Sleep Apnea

MINNEAPOLIS OTOLARYNGOLOGY, P.A.

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Tinnitus (Ear ringing)

Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) is quite common and can be caused by many conditions. The most common cause is hearing loss. There are many causes of hearing loss - most commonly as a result of aging, or noise exposure. Some patients have tinnitus without hearing loss. Sometimes head trauma or TMJ (jaw pain) can cause tinnitus. Certain medications (aspirin, Lasix) can cause tinnitus.

Tinnitus Treatment

In most cases, there is no specific treatment for ear and head noise. The following list can help lessen the severity of tinnitus:

- Avoid loud sounds and noises
- Control high blood pressure
- Decrease salt intake
- Avoid stimulants such as coffee, tea, cola, and tobacco
- Exercise daily
- Get adequate rest and avoid fatigue
- Try to stop worrying about the noise. Recognize tinnitus as an annoyance and learn to ignore it as much as possible.

What else can be done to help me cope with tinnitus?

Medication. There is no medication or herbal remedy which reliably improves tinnitus. Our practice does not condone or condemn use of such remedies.

Masking. Tinnitus is usually more bothersome in quiet surroundings. A competing sound at a constant low level, such as a fan or radio static (white noise), may mask the tinnitus and make it less noticeable. Products that generate white noise are also available through catalogs and specialty stores.

Hearing Aids. If you have a hearing loss, a hearing aid(s) may reduce head noise while you are wearing it and sometimes cause it to go away temporarily. It is important not to set the hearing aid at excessively loud levels, as this can worsen the tinnitus in some cases. However, a thorough trial before purchase of a hearing aid is advisable if your primary purpose is the relief of tinnitus.

Tinnitus retraining is available for patients who are still bothered by tinnitus after more conservative treatment. This is “physical therapy” for the ears and is provided by an audiologist who is knowledgeable about this therapy. This program takes time and commitment for best results.

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