

Tips For Managing Tinnitus (from ATA.org website)

Diagnose and Understand Your Tinnitus

DO NOT panic. Tinnitus is usually not a sign of a serious, ongoing medical condition. **CHECK** things out. The sounds you hear may actually be normal sounds created by the human body at work.

SEE an audiologist or ear, nose and throat specialist (ENT) interested and experienced in tinnitus treatment.

REVIEW your current medications (prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins and other supplements) with your medical professional to find possible causes of your tinnitus.

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."

BE a detective. Keep track of what triggers your tinnitus.

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.

Find Effective Treatment and Take Care of Yourself

BE KIND to yourself. Developing tinnitus means you have undergone a significant physical, emotional and maybe even life-style change.

EXAMINE how you live to find ways to eliminate or reduce some stress in different parts of your life; stress often makes tinnitus worse.

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.)

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.

PROTECT YOURSELF from further auditory damage by avoiding loud places and by using earplugs when you can't avoid loud noise.

Your Attitude Matters

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.

TAKE HEART. In many cases people with tinnitus "habituate" to it, meaning they get used to it and notice it less than at first.

BE INVOLVED in your recovery. Consider yourself part of your treatment team where your thoughts and feelings should count.

DO NOT WASTE time blaming yourself for your tinnitus. The causes of tinnitus are varied and difficult to determine.

Line Up Support

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.

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. (ATA has information on tinnitus support groups and individual, helpful volunteers.)

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.

CONTINUE SEEKING reliable information from ATA and other credible sources.