

# Tinnitus

Tinnitus is a perception of sound in the head and/or the ear that has no external source. This is sometimes described as a buzzing, hissing, whistling or ringing in the ear. It can be intermittent or constant and can vary in volume or intensity. Sometimes it can even be a piece of music that is heard, often described as a 'musical hallucination'. Others experience it as beating in time with their heart; this is known as pulsatile tinnitus.

Tinnitus is quite common and around 30% of people will experience it at some point in their lives. For most it is not a problem, but for those who live with persistent tinnitus it can have a significant impact on the quality of their lives.

It is very hard to say what causes tinnitus; it's not a disease in and of itself, but often occurs where there are other underlying conditions, to which it can be linked, e.g., hearing loss, exposure to loud noise, anxiety or stress, earwax, head injuries, etc. In Ménière's Disease, a condition that is often associated with vertigo causing dizziness and nausea, tinnitus can be very severe.

There is no single treatment for tinnitus that works for everyone. If an underlying cause can be found, treating this might help – e.g. removing earwax. If specific causes cannot be identified, then things like sound therapy, counselling, hypnotherapy,



cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or tinnitus behavioural therapy (TRT) might help.

So, what should you do if you are experiencing tinnitus? If you hear buzzing or ringing in your ears, particularly if this is continuous or regular over a prolonged period of time, you should first consult your GP or discuss it with your hearing care professional. They will firstly check for any potential cause, such as earwax or infection. If there is nothing obvious you may be referred for further investigation. If a cause cannot be identified, it is likely you will be referred on to a tinnitus clinic that can support you and offer various strategies to help manage the condition.

Many people have found that the wearing of hearing aids helps, particularly when the symptom is associated with their hearing loss. Some hearing aids have built in 'tinnitus maskers', which can be effective for some people. Other specialised tinnitus therapy equipment is also available. If you are a tinnitus sufferer and this is causing you discomfort, why not make an appointment to talk with one of our Audiologists, who are tinnitus trained and will be able to advise you about what help is available for you. ■

***This is another area where the Correct Hearing Healthcare service goes beyond just the sale and fitting of hearing aids.***

To make an appointment please phone **0115 961 8351** or email **info@correcthearing.co.uk**

Correct Hearing, 242 Oakdale Road, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 1AD

Also at, Unit 36, The George Centre, High Street, Grantham NG31 6LH Tel: **01476 249319**