

Counseling for Tinnitus

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Theoretical approaches to counseling for tinnitus

- Cognitive
 - inappropriate ways of thinking about tinnitus
 - Sweetow (1984a,b), Andersson and Kaldo (2006), Hallam and McKenna (2006)
- Attention
 - Failure to shift attention away from tinnitus
 - Hallam et al., (1984, 1989), Hallam & McKenna (2006)
- Learning
 - Responses to tinnitus are learned
 - Jastreboff and Hazell (1993), Bartnik and Skarzynski (2006), McKenna (2004), Hallam et al., (1984)
- Fearfulness
 - Afraid it will never go away (continuous anxiety)
- Loss of locus of control
 - Patient has no control over tinnitus and life
- Acceptance
 - Tinnitus is part of me, I own it (Moher, 2006)

Changing Thoughts

- reassurance
- common problem
- many known causes (e.g. noise exposure)
- not a health risk
- lots of people have enjoyable lives with it
- follow-up care available

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Changing behavior

- Refocus
- Activities replacement
- Managing stress
 - Relaxation, Mindfulness, Yoga, Exercise, Art

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Tyler and Babin (1986, 1993)

- Counseling and Sound Therapy
 - Consider all difficulties of that patient
 - Information about tinnitus
 - Provide reassurance
 - Include family members
 - sleep counseling
 - Hearing aids, partial and total masking

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Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Henry and Wilson (2000, 2001)

- reducing general arousal, tension or discomfort
- cognitive restructuring
- attention direction processes
- stress management
- coping
 - modification of avoidance behavior

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Event	Belief	Result
Waiting for a friend who is late	She doesn't care	Depressed
	Can't wait to see her	Excited
	Hope she is OK	anxious

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Providing information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing • Hearing loss • Tinnitus epidemiology • Tinnitus mechanisms • Central nervous system • Habituation • Attention • Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleep • Concentration • Auditory training • Lifestyles • Self image • Treatment options for hearing loss • Treatment options for tinnitus

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Counseling beyond information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to the patient • individual patient needs • Nurturing expectations • Consider emotional problems related to tinnitus • Sleep management • Change attitude and Self esteem • Diversionary tactics (attention) • Coping strategies • Cognitive behavior therapy • Habituation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxation • Modifying the environment • Consideration all problems (e.g. relationships) • Reassurance • The use of diaries • Activities • lifestyle changes (being positive and active) • stress management • changing thinking • Relapse prevention

Simple Reassurance

- common problem
- many known causes (e.g. noise exposure)
- not a health risk
- First 6-12 months are worst
- Distressed reaction is normal/OK
- lots of people have enjoyable lives with it
- follow-up care available

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Tinnitus Activities Treatment

- Developed in 1990s
- Combines Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Existentialism, Acceptance, Relaxation
 1. Emotions
 2. Hearing
 3. Sleep
 4. Concentration
- Tyler, R. S., Gehring, A. K., Noble, W., Dunn, C. C., Witt, S. A., & Bardia, A. (2006). Tinnitus Activities Treatment. Chapter 9. In R.S. Tyler (Ed.), **Tinnitus Treatment: Clinical Protocols** (116-132). New York: Thieme.

Tinnitus Activities Treatment

- Collaborative
 - Determine needs and understanding individual patient
- Include Activities, Coping / Management, Relaxation Strategies
- Programmatic counseling in 4 areas
 - Thoughts and emotions, Hearing, Sleep, Concentration

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Picture-Based Tinnitus Activities Treatment Counseling (provided on our website)

- A series of pictures that can help with your counseling session
- Provide orderly fashion
- Not overlook important concepts
- Easier for the patient to understand concepts

Counseling Sessions

- Introduction
- Session 1
 - Thoughts and Emotions
 - Give Activities (e.g. diary)
- Session 2
 - Review of Session 1 Activities
 - Hearing and Communication
 - Give Activities

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Counseling Sessions

- Session 3 (optional)
 - Review of Session 2 Activities
 - Sleep
 - Give Activities (e.g. diary)
- Session 4 (optional)
 - Review of previous Session Activities
 - Concentration
 - Give Activities

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Counseling Sessions

- Summary Session
 - Review of previous Session Activities
 - General overview
 - Questions?
 - Relapse prevention

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Emotional Well-Being

Overall Plan

1. Your story
2. Information about hearing loss, tinnitus, and attention
3. Ways to make tinnitus less prominent
4. Changing things to manage better
5. Review of action plan

•Emotional Well-Being 73

Where do you want to start?



•Emotional Well-Being 74

What do you think caused your tinnitus?



•Emotional Well-Being 75

How has tinnitus influenced your life?



•Emotional Well-Being 76


How do you think we might be able to help you?




•Emotional Well-Being 77

Tinnitus is an Increase in Spontaneous Nerve Activity

Normal Hearing  Hear Silence

Hearing Loss (No Tinnitus)  Hear Silence

Tinnitus  Hear Sound

•Emotional Well-Being 78

Things That Capture Our Conscious Attention



Unusual



Important



Scary



Unexpected

•Emotional Well-Being 79

Hearing and Communication

Session 4

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•Hearing 80

3. Factors that Affect Communication

- Hearing loss
- Background noise
- Ability to see the talker
- Familiarity with talker
- Familiarity with topic of discussion
- Stress level



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•Hearing 81

4. How Tinnitus Can Affect Hearing

- Tinnitus is not damaging your hearing
- When you focus on your tinnitus, it is harder to attend to your communication partner
- Tinnitus might make some sounds difficult to hear



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•Hearing 82

5. Strategies to Improve Hearing and Communication

1. Amplification
2. Reducing background noise
3. Watching faces
4. Using 'repair' strategies
5. Positively influencing the communication situation



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•Hearing 83

Activities

- Utilize the strategies discussed to improve hearing and communication.
 - List the most difficult listening situations for you
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 - What can you do to improve those listening situations?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 - What can you do to reduce the background noise?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

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•Hearing 84

Sleep

Normal Sleep Patterns

- Adults need an average of 8 hours a night
- Amount of sleep varies from one individual to another
- The best sleep consists of uninterrupted sleep



•S-3

•86

Things That Affect Sleep

- Stress and emotions (e.g. depression, anxiety)
- Environmental factors
 - Noise
 - Light
 - Temperature
- Irregular work schedules
- Jet lag/time zone changes



•S-3

•87

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

- Learn to systematically tense and relax groups of muscles
- With practice you will recognize a tensed muscle or a relaxed muscle
- This skill allows you to produce physical muscular relaxation at the first signs of tension



•S-3

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Concentration

C. Things That Affect Concentration

- The environment
 - Noise
 - Distractions
 - Lighting
 - Temperature
- Your physical state
 - Hunger
 - Tiredness
 - Current health status



•Concentration 90

E. Strategies to Improve Concentration

1. Interpret tinnitus as not important
2. Decrease prominence of tinnitus
3. Eliminate distractions
4. Adjust work habits
5. Stay focused
6. Take control of your attention

•Concentration 91

6. Take Control of Your Attention

- The focus of our attention is largely under voluntary control
- You can learn to control the focus of your attention under various conditions
- By bringing the focus of attention under control, tinnitus-related distress will be reduced at certain times



•Concentration 92

Attention Control Exercises

- Learn to switch attention from one stimulus (e.g. object, sensation, thought, activity) to another at will
- Allows you to refocus your attention from your tinnitus onto other stimuli, external or internal



•Concentration 93

Visual Attention Example

1. Focus on a nearby object (e.g. pencil, book, etc)
2. Study that object
3. Now switch your attention to looking in the distance (e.g. out the window, down the hall, etc)
4. Switch back and forth between the two several times
5. Notice that you can choose which item you visually pay attention to while ignoring other things around you

•Concentration 94

Sound Example

1. Listen for a prominent sound around you (e.g. talking, heater noise, etc)
2. Now listen to a different sound in the room
3. Continue to try and focus on certain sounds while ignoring others around you

•Concentration 95

homework assignments

- Give at least one example of the link between a situation–thought–emotion

Event: waking up in the middle of the night
 Thought: I'll be exhausted tomorrow!
 Emotion: worry, frustration

Event: waking up in the middle of the night
 Thought: I've only had 4 hours of sleep, but I used to do this in college/when my children were young, I'll survive
 Emotion: less uptight

GROUP SESSION

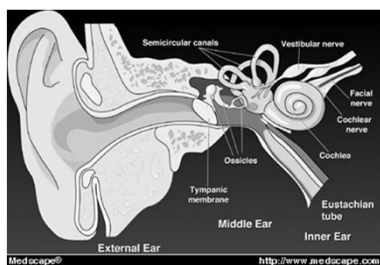
- Sample slides form our
- Once a month
- Partners welcome
- 6-10 people
- Leader (you) must be in charge!

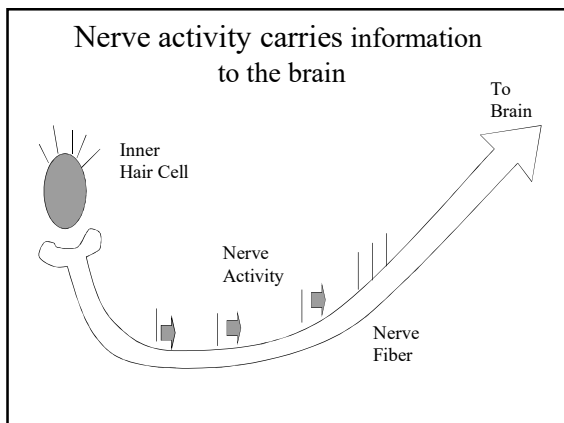
Overview

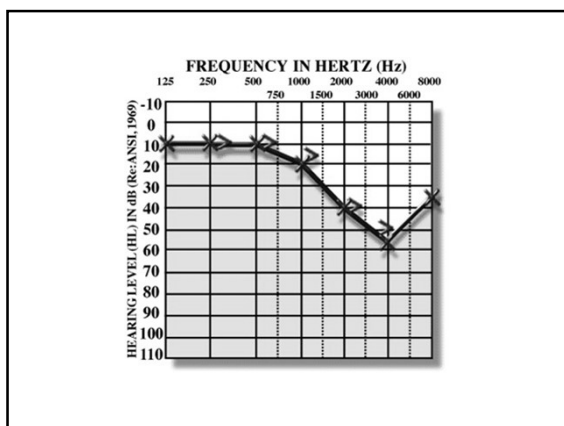
- Introductions
- Hearing
- Hearing loss
- What is tinnitus
- Treatments for tinnitus
- Our options – counseling and sound therapy, hearing aids, tinnitus devices
- Self help

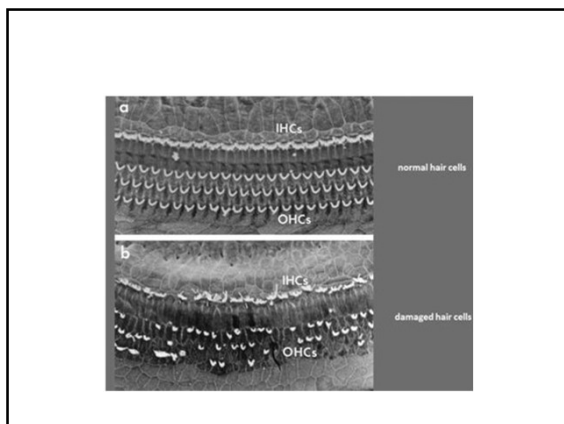
Introductions

- Your first name
- What your tinnitus sounds like
 - (e.g. ringing, humming)?
- How long have you had tinnitus?









What is tinnitus

- Causes
- Prevalence
- Mechanisms

- What do you think caused your tinnitus?

There are many different causes of tinnitus

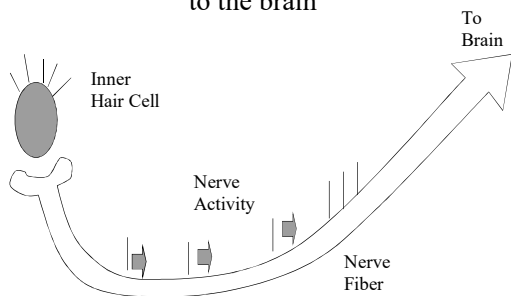


Tinnitus is Common

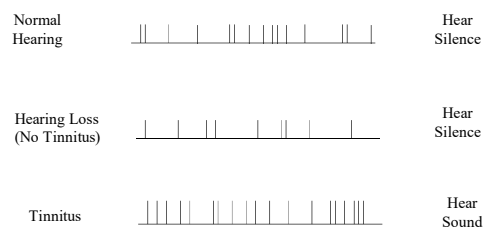
- 10 in 100 (10%) people have tinnitus
- 1 in 100 (1%) people are bothered by their tinnitus
- 20 in 100 (20%) people over 60 years old have tinnitus



Nerve activity carries information to the brain



Tinnitus is likely the result of an increase in spontaneous nerve activity



Tinnitus Does Not

- Make you deaf
- Lead to senility
- Imply a sign of mental illness



Reactions to tinnitus

- What is the biggest problem you have that you believe has resulted from your tinnitus?

Reactions to tinnitus

- Thoughts and emotions
- Hearing difficulties
- Sleep
- Concentration

Treatments for tinnitus

- What have you tried?
- What has been successful?



Treatments

- At this time, there are no widely accepted cures for tinnitus,
- There are no studies that have shown a cure that have used appropriate research designs and have been replicated by others

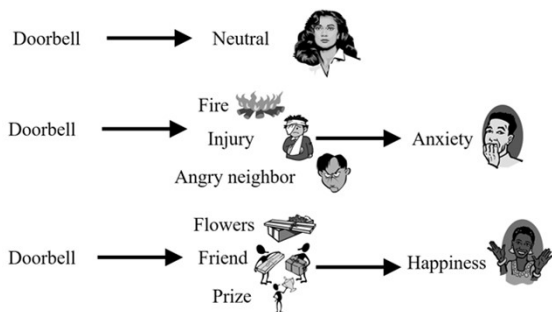
Excellent options –

- Counseling and Sound Therapy
- Individualized Tinnitus Activities Treatment
- Hearing Aids
- Tinnitus Devices

Tinnitus Activities Treatment

- Individualized
- Focus in areas of
 - THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS,
 - HEARING,
 - SLEEP,
 - CONCENTRATION
- Activities reviewed, homework assigned

Our Thoughts and Emotions



Do any sounds make your tinnitus
less noticeable?

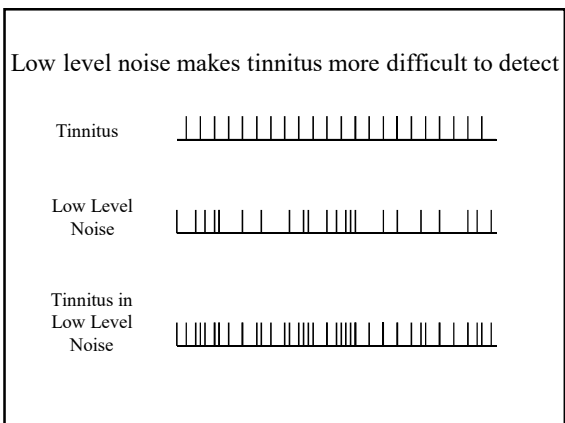


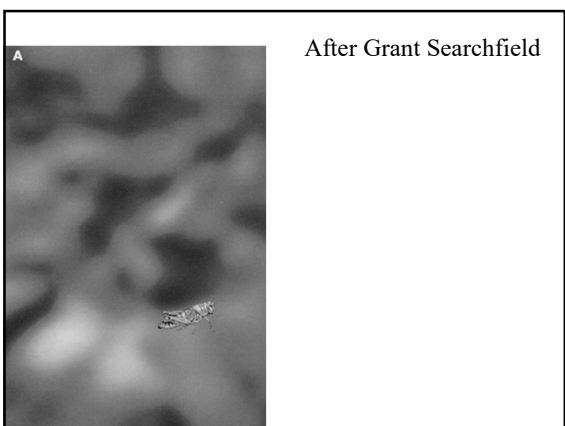
Sound Therapy

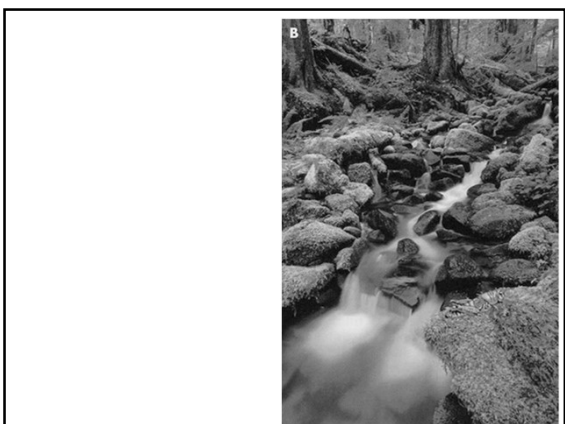
- **Hearing Aids**
 - Improve hearing
 - Improve communication
 - Reduce stress of intensive listening
- Hearing aids often help tinnitus
 - Less stress, facilitates positive reactions to tinnitus
 - Background noise creates partial masking
- Our hearing aid center provides excellent service

Sound Therapy Options

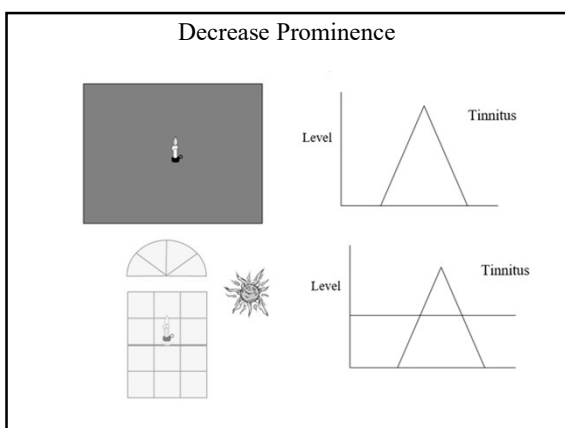
- Non-wearable sound
 - demonstration
- Wearable options
 - Hearing aids
 - Noise generators
 - Tonal sound generators
 - Processed music

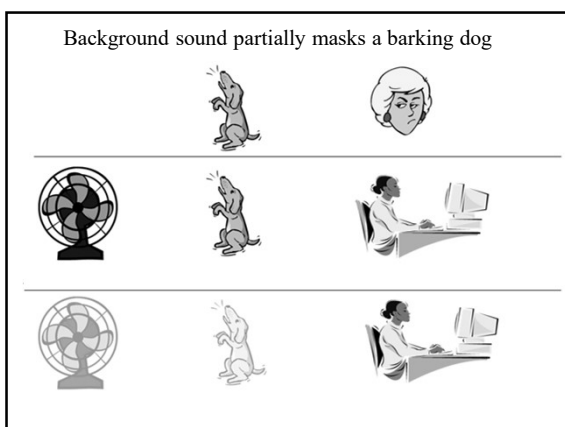












Summary

- Hearing loss and tinnitus are related
- Tinnitus is a change in spontaneous activity
- There is no cure for tinnitus
- Options include
 - counseling and sound therapy,
 - hearing aids,
 - tinnitus devices

How do you want to manage your tinnitus?

1. Focus on other areas of your life and put tinnitus in the background.
2. Use low level sound in your environment (sound machine, CDs, television, etc)
3. Use wearable tinnitus noise generators
4. Undertake tinnitus counseling with an expert
5. use hearing aids (in the case of tinnitus and hearing loss)
