

# Tinnitus

Tinnitus can take many forms and have many causes. If you suffer from tinnitus, seek a medical evaluation. While finding a cause may bring resolution through medical intervention, many are left without a known cause. The good news for tinnitus sufferers is that TRT (see definition, below right) success does not depend on cause or severity. A tinnitus specialist can create a personalized TRT program to provide relief for those who experience mild annoyance to debilitating distress from their symptoms. There is help and there is hope!

## Tips for Tinnitus Therapy

### Do

- Follow Cognitive Behavioral Strategies for tinnitus concerns
- Use sound enrichment
- Address stress, anxiety, and depression concerns
- Understand the cause of tinnitus for you
- Add sound enrichment to your bedroom 24 hrs/day
- Be patient, treatment can take up to 18 months
- Wear hearing protection when necessary

### Don't

- Read tinnitus message boards
- Drastically and quickly change your diet or lifestyle
- Listen to unpleasant sounds
- Overprotect your hearing or avoid sound

## Sound Enrichment

Sound enrichment can come from nature, table top sound machines, ear level sound generators, smartphone apps, or iPods/MP3 players.

Sound enrichment should be used 24 hours a day.

Sound enrichment should not mask or suppress tinnitus.

Sound enrichment should never produce annoyance, distraction, or aversion of any sort.

Sound enrichment supplements tinnitus therapy and does not provide lasting improvement on its own.

**Tinnitus:** the perception of sound in one or both ears without an external source. Often called “ringing in the ears,” tinnitus sounds can actually range from air rushing, crickets, buzzing, hissing, clicking or even roaring. The sounds can occur constantly or occasionally, ranging from soft to very loud. Patients with tinnitus are not imagining these sounds; they are associated with true neural activity.

**Tinnitus Retraining Therapy (TRT):** a form of habituation therapy developed by acclaimed neuroscientist Dr. Pawel Jastreboff that uses a combination of low-level, broadband noise and counseling to lessen the awareness of tinnitus. The distress and annoyance of tinnitus are removed in successful cases.

