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TINNITUS

What is tinnitus?

Tinnitus is the name for ringing in the ears. Nearly 36 million American suffer from the discomfort. It can vary in pitch from a low roat to a high pitch squeal or whine. It can be so annoying and distracting that people cannot lead normal lives.

Causes:

Most tinnitus comes from damage to the microscopic endings of the hearing nerve in the inner ear. Injury to the nerves can cause hearing loss and tinnitus. Advancing age is often accompanied by a certain amount of hearing nerve impairment and tinnitus. In the younger population, exposure to loud noises is probably the leading cause of tinnitus, and often damages then hearing as well. Sometimes a small plug of wax in the ear canal can also cause some temporary tinnitus or tinnitus can be a symptom of stiffening of the middle ear bones known as "otosclerosis". Tinnitus can also be caused by allergies, high or low blood pressure, tumors, diabetes, thyroid problems or injury to the head or neck. A variety of other causes including medications such as anti-inflammatories, antibiotics, sedatives, antidepressants and aspirin can also contribute to tinnitus.

Treatment;

In most cases there is no specific medical or surgical treatment for tinnitus. If your provider finds a specific cause of the tinnitus, they may be able to eliminate the noise. This determination often times requires further diagnostic testing, such as imagine, balance testing or laboratory work. Occasionally, medication can be prescribed that may help decrease the noise.

Recommendations:

- Avoid exposure to loud sounds and noises
- Get your blood pressure checked on a regular basis
- Decrease your salt intake
- Avoid excessive use of stimulants such as coffee, tea, soda and tobacco
- Exercise daily
- Get adequate rest and avoid fatigue
- Try biofeedback and relaxation exercises