

What can I do to help my tinnitus?

It is quite natural to feel anxious and afraid when you first experience tinnitus, but there are plenty of simple ways to help you improve your quality of life and make a real difference to living with tinnitus.

Personal contact

It can often be very helpful to talk to someone who understands how you are feeling, who can reassure you about anxieties you may have and answer your questions. The BTA helpline is available to offer support, and can provide details of local groups and information days.

Use sound

Have environmental sounds playing at a comfortable level in the background. This will reduce the intrusiveness of your tinnitus. For more information, ask for our "Sound therapy" leaflet.

Join the BTA

BTA members hear about all the latest progress in research from our magazine **Quiet**, and tell us they are reassured by the stories of others with tinnitus that we feature. Members also get discounts on products to help them cope with their tinnitus.

At night

If you are having difficulty getting off to sleep, it may be that the shift from a relatively noisy daytime environment to the quietness of the bedroom makes the tinnitus noises more noticeable. Some people find having some low level sound can help mask tinnitus. For more information, ask for our leaflet on tinnitus and sleep.

Visit your GP

If you think you have tinnitus, go and see your GP. There are several treatment options available, and your GP will be able to refer you to someone who can help.

Relax

Learning to relax properly is one of the best ways to help yourself. Many people who practise regular relaxation techniques say they reduce the loudness of their tinnitus and helps them become indifferent to their noises. They also help break down the vicious circle of stress and anxiety that many people find accompanies their tinnitus. Why not try tai chi, qi gong, yoga, meditation or one of the BTA's relaxation CDs?

Exercise

Regular exercise helps the body achieve a higher level of well-being and in most cases this helps people to ignore and cope with their tinnitus more easily, as well as helping them sleep better. If you are not used to exercise, begin gently with a swim or brisk walk. Choose somewhere quiet to walk if you find the traffic stressful, although some people with tinnitus seek out noisy places to reduce its intrusiveness. Try to do a range of exercises to improve strength, cardiovascular fitness, suppleness and flexibility.

Keep active

If your mind is occupied with something absorbing, it is easier to forget about tinnitus. Work, leisure pursuits and other interests can all help to provide a worthwhile focus.

For more information on any of the topics mentioned here, please contact us on **0800 018 0527** or email **info@tinnitus.org.uk**

Alternatively, have a look at our website **www.tinnitus.org.uk**

BTA Helpline: 0800 018 0527