Tinnitus Management Resources

Hearing Aid Evaluation
A hearing aid evaluation is an educational session for patients when the audiologist learns about the patient's specific hearing and listening goals and needs, and empowers them with the education and tools to manage their hearing loss and/or tinnitus.

Whether a patient will pursue hearing aids is dependent on many factors including hearing loss, their listening demands, presence of tinnitus, quality of life, etc. It is not always possible to predict whether a patient will achieve benefit from hearing aids using the audiogram alone.

Please refer patients for an HAE whenever there are concerns about hearing and/or tinnitus. Many patients who try hearing aids based on subjective report of difficulty hearing regardless of hearing loss severity are successful hearing aid users and report improved quality of life. Many patients with tinnitus achieve a significant reduction in their tinnitus awareness and improvement in quality of life with hearing aids.

Maskers
Maskers come in many forms and include sound machines, apps for smart phones, peaceful music ("elevator music"), fans, or other pleasant sounds that can keep the brain engaged in passive listening such that it does not attend to the tinnitus. The goal is for the masking sound to be low in volume but still audible. The stimulus can be any pleasant sound (white noise, water sounds, etc). Maskers can be purchased through retailers such as Amazon and Walmart.

A note on masker hearing aids: Maskers are available in many hearing aids. The masker is simply a program that can be added by the audiologist. These hearing aids do not differ from traditional hearing aids in regard to price, ability to amplify, or effectiveness. Patients who are interested in masker hearing aids should be referred for hearing aid evaluation.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
Both AAO-HNS and AAA recommend hearing aids and CBT as the evidence-based treatments for tinnitus. CBT is a form of counseling; other types of counseling may be recommended after evaluation by a qualified mental health professional. Although maskers, guided relaxation, acupuncture, etc, may be complimentary treatments, we encourage evidence-based treatment (hearing aids and CBT) as the standard treatment plan for patients with tinnitus.


The best way for patients to begin CBT is to contact their health insurance company for a list of local providers. They may also contact their primary care provider (PCP) for recommendations.
Psychiatric evaluation and/or management may be helpful for people with tinnitus, even for patients who experience mild depression, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, etc. Psychiatric care helps to minimize the medical problems that could hinder tinnitus management and to maximize the audiological interventions (like hearing aids). At Jefferson, we offer an **in-house psychiatrist who specializes in tinnitus:**

Keira Chism MD  
Jefferson Department of Psychiatry  
1020 Sansom Street  
Suite 1652  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
Phone: (215) 955-8962

Patients may also contact their health insurance company for a list of local providers. They may also contact their primary care provider (PCP) for recommendations.

**Sleep Consultations**

Patients may report having bothersome tinnitus during sleep times. They may also report general complaints regarding sleep, including insomnia, waking at night and not being able to fall asleep again, not getting enough sleep, etc. It is important to note that tinnitus does not “wake up” the patient, but rather tinnitus may be perceived if the patient is waking during sleep times. For these patients, the **Jefferson Sleep Center** may be a useful resource:

**Center City**  
700 Walnut Street, 2nd Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
(P) 1-800-533-3669

**Navy Yard**  
3 Crescent Drive  
Philadelphia, PA 19112  
(P) 1-800-533-3669

**Cherry Hill**  
2211 Chapel Avenue  
CherryHill, NJ 08002  
(P) 1-800-533-3669

**American Tinnitus Association (ATA)**  
[www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org) is a wonderful resource for information about tinnitus, support groups, educational videos, research, podcasts, and advocacy.