

South Louisiana

Ear, Nose, Throat & Facial Plastics

7043 Hwy. 190, East Service Rd. • Suite C • Covington, LA 70433
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These techniques can help you improve your quality of life by decreasing the emotional consequences of tinnitus.

Method 1: Identify Negative Thoughts/Incorrect Ideas

Stop Technique

Is my thought a fact?

Can I disprove this thought?

If this thought is true, what is a solution or coping mechanism?

Method 2: Healthy Lifestyle

Exercise

Nutritious Balanced Diet (Lower sodium, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine)

Adequate Sleep

Method 3: Healthy Noise Exposure

Protect ears when in high noise level environments only

Do NOT overprotect– this will make the problem worse

If you have normal hearing, enjoy it now. Everyone will gradually lose hearing over time so do not muffle your good hearing now.

If you are oversensitive to normal sounds, then an audiologist can work with you to decrease this sensitivity.

Method 4: Pleasant Sound Usage (environmental, cds, etc.)

Soothing/Relaxing sounds

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Interesting sounds to help you ignore tinnitus

Background sounds to help you maintain focus on something else

Method 5: Sleep Hygiene

Establish an evening routine to signal to your body that it is time to slow down. Showers/baths should be completed at least 1 hour prior to bedtime.

Sleep diaries can be useful in the beginning. Make notes of daytime activities influencing sleep (naps, exercise); usual bedtime preparations/activities prior to lights out. Note time in bed, time when lights turn off, # of times you wake up, time of final rising, and total length of sleep.

Alcohol – Disrupts sleep especially during second half of the night; May awaken earlier.

Caffeine – Stimulant that keeps you awake

Nicotine – Stimulant that keeps you awake

Food – Do not go to bed hungry or overfull.

Exercise early in evening rather than before bedtime.

Relaxation exercises to reduce muscle tension, arousal, heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration. Slows body down and gets it ready to rest.

Change unproductive thoughts into useful thoughts.

Establish an “earlier” worry time.

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Use a constant low-level sound in your room that is always present so it becomes part of the room.

Time in bed should be limited to only sleeping. Do not read or watch tv in bed. You want your brain to associate the bedroom with sleeping. If you do not fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and do something restful until you feel tired.

Clock Watching: Turn your clock around so you cannot see the time if you find yourself becoming anxious as the hours pass.

Progressive Relaxation

Learn to feel the difference between tense and relaxed muscles.

- Practice 2x day, preferably at same time when you will not be disturbed.
- Takes about 15 minutes
- Sit comfortably, straight and symmetrical.
- Place feet on floor without pressing down.
- Hold head straight in relation with your shoulders.
- Place hands on lap. Do not clutch them.

Write down start time of exercises. Rate tension on scale from 0 - 100. So same thing when you finish.

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Start by sitting comfortably with eyes closed. Tense 5 seconds & relax 10-15 seconds in this order:

- Right foot, Left foot
- Lower legs
- Upper legs
- Right hand/Left hand (Make fist)
- Upper arm (Press elbows to body)
- Forehead (Wrinkle)
- Eyebrows (Raise/lower)
- Eyelids
- Jaws (Gently open/close)
- Tongue (Press tongue up/down)
- Lips (Press together)
- Shoulders (Raise upward)
- Take and deep breath, then release slowly.

Positive Imagery

1. Choose a mental image unrelated to tinnitus. It can be something from nature or wildlife. It is better not to include other people in your image. Image should not be associated with work. Can include many senses, including vision, hearing, and smell.
2. Use relaxation exercises. Then focus on image.

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3. Imagine exploring the image. If you are looking at the sea: look to right and left. Perhaps there is a boat. Look at beach. Smell salty air. Feel sand under feet. Feel gentle breezes and sunshine. Hear waves.
4. Let go of image and slowly open eyes. Do not stay too long with your image so that tinnitus takes over. If that happens, focus again on your image. Stop if you lose connection. Start by doing small exercises.