

Curing Tinnitus:



Hidden Natural Secrets Revealed

Table of Contents

Introduction

Page 4

*Chapter One: Why Are My Ears Ringing?:
An Overview of Tinnitus*

Page 8

*Chapter Two: Do You Hear What I Hear:
How Your Ear Works*

Page 17

Chapter Three: Types of Tinnitus

Page 24

Chapter Four: Causes and Prevention of Tinnitus

Page 29

Chapter Five: Secret Causes of Tinnitus

Page 42

Chapter Six: Natural Secrets To Curing Tinnitus

Page 50

Conclusion

Page 64

References

Page 65

Disclaimer

This book is for information only. Nothing in it is intended to diagnose a disease. Neither should any information contained herein replace any consultation with your personal physician or a specialist. Always consult your physician when changing any aspect of your health care regimen.

Introduction

Now, a quick overview of the health condition known as tinnitus, or ringing in the ears.

How many individuals suffer from this?

Tinnitus. Have you ever heard of this medical condition? What if I said that it's more commonly referred to as ringing in the ears?

Ah! Now you recognize the problem. In fact, you may be listening to ringing right now as you read this book. You probably had no idea that it was common enough to actually be given a medical name.

The truth of the matter is that tinnitus - defined for brevity's sake as any continued noise in your ears - affects far more individuals than you can imagine.

You Are Not Alone

How long have you been plagued by ringing in the ears? Perhaps it's a chronic problem for you. Or maybe it just affects you periodically. Whatever the case, you're probably relieved to know what you are not alone. I bet at some point, you may have been worried that you might have been "losing it".

Have you postponed seeing a medical professional about this, fearful they would dismiss your symptoms as "being all in your head"? (No pun intended. Really!)

Not only is tinnitus an actual health problem, but its prevalence in the United States is increasing. Currently, between 37 to 40 million people are afflicted with some form of ringing in the ears. That means upwards of 14 percent of the population knows what it's like to experience tinnitus. Viewed in yet another way, that's roughly one in seven individuals. See, you really aren't alone!

Curing Tinnitus

Just What Do You Hear With Tinnitus?

The deviations of this noise in the ears vary widely with the individual. About 15 percent say their experience lasted more than a quarter of an hour. Another six percent say the noise is so loud, so troublesome and so irritating that they've actually sought medical attention for it.

Age Related

It appears that tinnitus is age related. However that does not mean that younger individuals are immune from it. Granted, only about one percent of those younger than 45 experience it. About 12 percent of those individuals between 60 and 69 develop it -- and the prevalence of tinnitus rises to nearly 30 percent for those in their 70s.

Men have a slight edge in acquiring this condition than women - but not by much. One study indicated 6.6 percent of the male population is affected compared to 5.6 percent of the female population. These statistics shift, however, with the aging population.

Older men seem to acquire tinnitus more frequently than women. Nearly 12 percent of men age 65 and over reported its symptoms, while only 7 percent of women in the same age group are affected.

No, It's Not A Modern Phenomenon

I've heard many people claim that the noises many of us hear are a creation of our technological advancement. It's the price we pay, so to speak, for progress. They claim our ancestors didn't experience this problem.

Ah! But they're so wrong. Tinnitus is actually a very old, even ancient, problem. The name itself derives from a Latin word: *tinnire*, meaning a ringing or a tinkling sound.

Curing Tinnitus

The truth is that students of ancient history have found evidence of this malady in the medical writings of the Mesopotamia and Egyptian civilizations. From what is recorded, it appears that ringing in the ears was every bit as common then as it is now.

Some people argue that its prevalence today is on the increase. That's a tough call. You really can't say that with certainty. What you can say, though, is that more *recorded* cases of it exist than ever before. This, then, begs the question: How many individuals suffered previously without seeking medical attention?

However some experts still say that more of us than ever before are at risk of developing it than ever before. Why is that?

For many individuals, the origin of their tinnitus is easy enough to discover: exposure to sounds loud enough to cause hearing loss. The hearing loss, though, is not a sudden onset. Rather it's one that slowly develops nearly unnoticeably over the years - even decades.

And, yes, this is in part thanks to the progress of technology. Home entertainment options from television to music to videos all involve our hearing. You name it, we can listen to it - and we can crank that volume up all the way if we please. And that's not even taking into account the venerable rock concert.

But wait, I'm not done yet! We haven't even talked about those who've spent 15, 20, or more years working in noisy factories. No doubt "noise pollution" is an inevitable part of our environment.

Medical Advances As A Cause

It may be hard to believe, but it just might be the case. Some people say they were never bothered with tinnitus until they began taking specific medications. These claims have actually been verified.

But let's not overlook one of the obvious reasons for a perceived increased prevalence of tinnitus. As a whole, our population lives longer. As you'll recall, tinnitus becomes much more common as you age. It's only natural that more cases will be reported as more

Curing Tinnitus

individuals enjoy longer life spans, and that more individuals are subjected to this problem.

Many in the medical profession are frustrated because prescription medications only seem to relieve the symptoms for few people. The outlook, according to some, is bleak. Even the British Tinnitus Association accepts this dismal outlook.

They claim, "For the great majority of sufferers, the most they can hope for is relief from the consequences of tinnitus...Proper counseling can teach people to adjust to the condition. But personal management of it has to be learned, often with difficulty and most hospitals are poorly equipped to teach these techniques."

My response to this is, nonsense! You don't have to live with that constant, inevitable ringing in your ears. And I'm living proof that you don't. What's more, that's exactly why I wrote this book. To show you how to break away from this annoying, even disabling, health condition.

You don't have to suffer one minute longer thanks to natural secrets that are probably staring you right in the face. And don't think for a minute a "cure" means suffering through some bizarre treatment that's actually worse than the condition itself.

This book is designed to provide you with detailed and up-to-date information on tinnitus, exactly what it is, the symptoms it causes, and how it's discerned.

But more than that, we'll look at the treatments available to you both from a conventional medical viewpoint to various alternative and complementary therapies.

I've included such diverse treatments as herbal, homeopathic as well as therapies culled from the annals of traditional Chinese medicine.

Come join me as learn not more about tinnitus, but how to cure it so you're never bothered with it again.

Let's get started!

Natural Hidden Secrets Revealed

Chapter One: Why Are My Ears Ringing?

An Overview of Tinnitus

What exactly is tinnitus and do you have it? How to identify it, who's at risk and who is treated. Know the fundamentals and you're on your way to finding a cure!

Why do you keep walking over to your front door, opening it? Then you occasionally pick up your phone. Oh, you've got a ringing in your ears? No, checking the door or the telephone won't help your symptom. If it's really disrupting your daily routine (and it appears to be) why not just go to your local healthcare provider?

Our friend is apparently plagued by an insistent and persistent ringing of the ears. As we've already noticed this in the Introduction, many people are. What many individuals don't realize, however, is that ringing of the ears isn't really a disorder in and of itself. It's not an independent disease.

Rather, tinnitus is a symptom of another underlying condition. Sometimes that condition may be age-related hearing loss, an injury to the ear or disorder or a problem in your circulatory system.

For most of us, this condition is undoubtedly bothersome. But it usually isn't a sign of something serious. For the most part, the symptoms improve with treatment. In other cases, simply treating the underlying problem cures the individual.

And in some cases, when the ringing simply won't go away, medical experts are at least able to mask the noise, making tinnitus at least less noticeable.

Curing Tinnitus

Ringings? Not All The Time!

Tinnitus. We routinely call it a ringing in the ears. But that's not exactly an accurate description. For many people it does show up as a high-pitched ringing in the ears.

But surprisingly, not all individuals describe the sound as a ringing. The range of different sounds includes roaring, clicking, hissing and whistling to sounds that resembling human voices (Yes! Human voices).

The ringing sounds, though, are by far the most common. But even here the variations seem endless. People have reported ringing covering an entire range from a classic telephone's shrill ring to bell-like sounds.

Other people report that the noise is much closer to sounding like a hissing sound. High pitched, the sound is most often described as steam coming from a teapot.

Hums, Clicks And Other Sounds

Bees, they say. Or a swarm of flying insects. That's what some individuals claim their tinnitus sounds like. Some even say the sound of tinnitus is much closer to a humming sound. Again the range of the actual types of "hums" is as wide as the permutations of the ringing noises. In some cases the hum sounds like a "muffled choir." In others the sum resembled that of the background noise created when a radio is on -- but no specific station is selected.

Click. Click. Click. This tinnitus sound has been likened to the tapping of the keys on an old manual typewriter. Some even say the clicking is closer to the sound a hot automobile engine makes as it cools. Some individuals hear the clicks in an orderly pattern; for others the noise is totally random.

Curing Tinnitus

Many individuals say tinnitus shows up as a whistling noise. From human whistling to mechanical whistles, but for the most part the pitch and volume remain fairly constant.

Tinnitus has even been described as a growling in the ears -- a never-ending growling. Others say the sound is more like a chirping bird. And still others describe it as a babbling brook.

Voices? Do I Hear Voices?

These are the more common of the noises. A few individuals say the sound of tinnitus actually are more like human voices. At least, they say, they are "human-like" sounds. Individuals with tinnitus say they hear recognizable voices sometimes speaking recognizable words that even make sense occasionally.

If you think the number of individuals who hear the sound of voices are few and far between, think again. Researchers are learning tinnitus reveals itself through voice-like sounds are actually much more common than previously thought. This description, it appears, is merely under-reported.

Many individuals are reluctant to tell their doctor that the sounds are voice-like for fear of being seen as mentally unstable. There is, of course, a major difference between the voices of tinnitus and actually having voices talk to you.

Those of tinnitus can best be described as overhearing another's conversation. Words are often difficult to discern, you only hear part of the conversation and seldom does what you hear make a full sentence of an entire thought.

In contrast, those voices that may accompany or indicate a mental health problem, are usually commanding, demanding and authoritative.

Curing Tinnitus

I Hate To Bother You With This: When To See A Doctor

If the sounds in your ears are disrupting your daily routine, then by all means visit your local healthcare provider. He or she may be able to detect the cause of the tinnitus. If your tinnitus appears at about the same time you developed an upper respiratory infection like a cold, and lasts more than a week, then consult your physician.

And if your tinnitus just "showed up" one day for no apparent reason, then consult your physician. This is especially true if the ringing in your ears is accompanied by hearing loss or a case of vertigo.

Am I At Risk?

That depends on your health history as well as your environmental history. By environmental history I mean what loud noises you've been exposed to. Those individuals who have been exposed on a regular basis to loud noises are more likely to develop the ringing sensation in their ears. And this is especially true if you haven't protected your ears through the donning of ear plugs.

If you're 65 years or older, then the odds are stacking up that you're a likely candidate for tinnitus. It appears to become more common as people get older (we talk more about this in another chapter!).

And if you're an older adult and are already experiencing age-related hearing loss, you're even more likely than others to develop ringing in the ears.

Are you a white male? If you are, you're chances of developing tinnitus are also greater than average.

Finally, if you have ever experienced post-traumatic stress disorder you may be also experience a ringing in your ears.

Curing Tinnitus

Complications? What Complications?

For the vast majority of us, the occasional ringing in the ears is simply annoying. For others, however, it can seriously affect the quality of a person's life.

But more than that, chronic tinnitus can cause other complications, which include:

- Fatigue
- Sleeping problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Stress
- Memory problems
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Depression

If you suffer from any of these complications, you should consult your physician and get treated. No, getting treatment for the complications in no way actually assures you that your tinnitus will disappear. But it will definitely help you feel better.

What Do I Tell The Doctor?

You've made your appointment to talk to your physician about your nagging tinnitus. But as you think about it, what exactly are you going to tell him? Your family doctor may decide to refer you to a get a hearing or audiological exam.

Before that, however, he will ask about your symptoms. He'll ask a list of questions about other possible health conditions in your past as well as any hearing loss you may be experiencing at the present time.

He's not simply being nosy. He's searching to see if you have any illnesses or disorders which might prompt the tinnitus in the first

Curing Tinnitus

place. This includes any cardiovascular disorders or other underlying problems which may be the cause of your tinnitus.

If your doctor diagnoses you with tinnitus, he may refer you to an ear, nose and throat specialist, known as an *otolaryngologist*. Some people find they even work with an audiologist or hearing specialist.

Tests For Tinnitus

In the process of being diagnosed with tinnitus, you can certainly expect to go through a certain number of tests (now you knew that was coming!). This is in addition to the examinations of your ears, head and neck to find possible physical causes for your tinnitus.

Be prepared to take a complete hearing - or audiological - exam. This is done to help eliminate the possibility that your tinnitus is caused by some type of hearing loss.

He'll also check your ears for a buildup of earwax or other problems inside. In addition to this, don't be surprised if he pulls out his stethoscope. He'll press it over the area around your ears to check for any sounds.

You physician may request that you move your eyes, clench your jaw or even just move your neck, arms and legs. You may think these gestures are irrelevant, but they really aren't. If during this time the symptoms of your tinnitus worsens or even improves, it may help him discover an underlying disorder. Treating this disorder may indeed be the key to curing your tinnitus.

If your doctor suspects the origin of your tinnitus, they may additionally request that you undergo some x-ray imaging tests. Most likely these will be in the form of CT or MRI scans.

Exactly What Is Your Doctor Looking For?

Quite a few things, it turns out. Did you know that muscle contractions around your ear can actually cause a sharp clicking

Curing Tinnitus

noise? This clicking occurs in bursts which last from several seconds to a few minutes.

Other sounds they may be listening to include blood vessel problems, especially high blood pressure, an aneurysm or even a tumor. Any of these can actually increase the sound of your heartbeat in your ears. Ringing in the ears due to these problems is referred to as *pulsatile tinnitus*.

Sounds due to Meniere's syndrome may sound more like a low-pitched ringing. It may become very loud right before you experience vertigo or dizziness. If you're diagnosed with otosclerosis you can expect to hear a low-pitched ringing of the ears.

High-pitched ringing of the ears may be due to a blow to the head. In some instances, the tinnitus resulting from this experience may even reveal itself as a buzzing sound. If your disorder is due to this physical cause, you can be fairly certain that it will dissipate within a few hours.

Exposure to continued loud noises, however, may trigger chronic tinnitus. In this case, as with the head injury, the sounds you're likely to hear are high-pitched. The same is true with hearing loss related to aging as well as the use of medications.

Then, There May Be No Discernable Cause

Be prepared to be told that there is no discernable cause for your tinnitus. Many individuals experience this disorder without ever discovering any reason. While no cause can be found, your physician will still have some suggestions for helping you reduce the severity of the symptoms as well as helping you cope with the noises.

Drugs For Tinnitus

Curing tinnitus through prescription medication is tough. I'm not saying it's impossible, but it only seems to work for a handful of

Natural Hidden Secrets Revealed

Curing Tinnitus

individuals. And sometimes when a medication is discovered, its effects are anything but long lasting. Having said that, though, I would be remiss if I didn't spend a few moments explaining what medications your doctor may use in your treatment.

The first type of drug is the barbiturate. Normally used as a sedative to relieve insomnia and to reduce anxiety, it has been known to improve the sounds of tinnitus in some instances.

How it works, is a mystery even to the best of medical minds. It may help because the barbiturate is good at reducing the effects of stress. Or it may actually reduce the perception of the tinnitus.

Your doctor may be reluctant to prescribe it - and with good reason. It's far too easy for a person to become dependent on it. Not only that, but the drug's beneficial effects soon diminish as your body builds a tolerance to the drug. Additionally, many people experience serious withdrawal symptoms when they attempt to stop using it. And if those reasons weren't enough to have second thoughts about this drug, its long-term use may cause some serious adverse side effects, not the least of which is liver damage.

Introducing Lignocaine

Ever hear of lignocaine? You may have seen it referred to as lidocaine. Some physicians prescribe this to relieve tinnitus. It's more commonly used as a local anesthetic. And in some cases you may find it being used to relieve the itching and burning from a skin inflammation. This drug is also used to regulate an erratic heart rhythm.

Unfortunately it is only a short-term cure for tinnitus. And I mean short-term. It seems that the noises abate for several hours at best.

That, combined with potentially serious side effects, including convulsions and confusion, have just about curtailed its use as a tinnitus treatment.

Curing Tinnitus

Take A Tranquilizer?

Tranquilizers still retain their popularity as a tinnitus treatment. While it's doubtful that the drug itself has any direct effect on the disorder, the value of the treatment lies in the fact that it allows the individual to better cope with its symptoms.

The use of tranquilizers for this purpose divides the medical community. Some research reveals that two-thirds of those taking a tranquilizer for tinnitus were helped. Yet other studies indicate that the risks outweighed any potential benefits.

Two facts, however, appear fairly certain. Tranquilizers work best when the tinnitus symptoms are severe. And it works best when the individual has other problems related to stress or anxiety.

The Catch-22 Of Tinnitus

Now here's a paradox. Some antidepressants, like tricyclics, are well known for their ability to exacerbate tinnitus. Yet for some using this drug, they actually improve the condition.

Once again, medical science can't tell us why these drugs work (or don't work!). Some experts theorize their success lies in their anticonvulsive efforts. Other experts simply point to the links which seem to bind stress, anxiety and depression

Still another theory is that antidepressants actually reduce facial and oral pain. This leads some to believe that the drugs have some influence on the nerves involved in the hearing process.

As you can see, it's difficult to depend solely on drugs to quickly and easily solve your tinnitus problem. It's more logical to examine what causes the noises in your ears. If you knew the cause, then you can take at least some initial steps to relieving the damage.

And that's why learning more about the workings of your ear will help you understand more about the condition itself. In the following chapter, we step back a moment and reflect on the marvelous order of steps involved in getting the sound vibrations

to your ear, through the three sections of that organ, and translated into a form your brain can recognize as sound.

Don't worry. You don't need to know much about anatomy. I'll explain it in terms that we all can understand.

Chapter Two: Do You Hear What I Hear?: How Your Ear Works

It's hard to fully appreciate the problems of tinnitus if you don't fully understand the working of the ear itself.

The truth of the matter is that the process of hearing is complex - far more complex than most people realize. When we think hearing, we immediately think of the ear. But, in reality, the art of receiving and interpreting sounds requires the completion of an entire process. Should any one element in that process go awry, your hearing may become impaired. This process ensures, that the nerve impulses eventually get delivered to your brain.

For those us who may not remember from our high school days, let's review the three major parts of the ear: the outer, middle, and inner ear.

I'm All Ears: Tell Me About The Outer Ear

The outer ear has two basic components. The first is the most obvious. It's the structure which lies on either side of your head. While we refer to them as ears, the correct physiological term for them is the *auricle* or *pinna*.

The second part of the outer ear is called the *external auditory meatus*. This is a tube leading through the temporal bone of the skull to the eardrum.

Curing Tinnitus

The auricle, believe it or not, really doesn't aid you in your hearing, especially if you consider how a rabbit or even a cat uses the outside portion of his ears. Those animals use their ears much like satellites which collect the sound waves. The outside of the human ear is too small to actually be useful in the collection of the sound around you.

Not only that, but humans don't have the innate ability to move the outer ear - like a cat - to help in locating the sounds.

Where The Sound Is "Made"

If you were able to travel inside the auricle, you would discover a hollow area. This is called the *concha*. At the deepest portion of this concha the *external auditory meatus* begins.

Meatus, by the way, is an anatomical term meaning passage or opening. About an inch long, the meatus is slightly curved. The first third of it is made from cartilage while the last two-thirds are composed of bone.

It's lined by the skin and contains both the *sebaceous* and *ceruminous glands*. Scientists believe the ceruminous glands are actually modified sweat glands. Instead of secreting sweat, they produce a substance known as cerumen. You say you've never heard of cerumen. You're not alone. But perhaps you'd recognize it if we call it by its "name on the street" or in layman's terms: earwax. Oh, yeah! Now, you've heard of it!

The Middle Ear: Drumming Up Interest

The eardrum. It's the physical division between the outer and inner ear. The ear drum is located at the innermost end of the auditory canal of the outer ear.

And yes, it really does look, and act, like a drum.

The ear drum is a membrane made of skin as well as thin fibers of collagen. The drum is kept under a certain amount of tension,

Curing Tinnitus

thanks to the muscle called the tensor tympani, which runs from the drum itself to the wall of the middle ear. It's this muscle which keeps the drum responsive to sound waves.

Let's Talk About Ossicles

Also located in the middle ear is a chain of small bones known as the *auditory ossicles*. The job of this chain is to not only transmit the vibrations the ear drum perceives, but also to magnify them.

All together, there are a total of three ossicles. Of these the first two serve much like levers for the next in the chain. The last ossicle acts directly on the opening to the inner ear.

The first ossicle, called the hammer or the *malleus*, is attached to the upper portion of the ear drum. It responds to vibrations induced by sound waves. It then amplifies these before passing them off to the second ossicle.

The second of the three portions is called the anvil or the *incus*. Not only does the anvil receive the vibration for the hammer, but it then amplifies them one more time, before sending them on to the third portion of the chain.

The third and last segment is the stirrup, or the *stapes*. Interestingly, the stirrup actually resembles a stirrup (go figure!).

The innermost portion of the stirrup lies directly on what's called the oval window. This is the small opening of the skull marking the entrance to the inner ear.

Sound Wave Amplification

But that's not the only method by which sound amplification occurs in the middle ear. Sound is magnified by the eardrum itself. This structure contains a large surface area compared to that of the oval window. Its surface area is on average 8.5 square millimeters compared to the roughly 3.2 square millimeters of area the oval window possesses.

Curing Tinnitus

The difference in these areas creates the amplification. When the same amount of force is applied to a smaller surface, the intensity of the vibration is increased.

Between these two methods of amplification, the strength of the sound vibrations is increased upwards of 25 times. Just as your ear has a method to magnify the sound so you can hear, it also has a way to tone sounds down. It's called the *stapedial muscle*. This reduces the accumulation of oscillations in the ossicles simply by pulling the stirrup from the oval window.

Since the mechanism relies on your reflexes to function properly, it reacts too slowly to actually avoid possible damage from those sudden, loud noises we all experience now and then.

Still More To Come: Going Even Deeper Into The Middle Ear

This sequence of events as outlined so far would be remarkable in and of itself, if this were the only activity occurring in your middle ear. But, as they say on the television infomercials, "Wait...there's more, much more..."

What other duties does your middle ear perform? Let's talk pressure - ear pressure that is.

Your ear drum only responds to air pressure created by sound waves. This means it's vital that the pressure on both sides of the drum be equalized. Both the inner and the outer ear must have the same pressure.

If the pressure weren't equal, your drum would be unnaturally distended - either toward the inner or the outer ear - depending on where the pressure was greater.

You can thank your *Eustachian tubes* for the maintenance of this constant equalization. Eustachian tubes are very narrow conduits. One of them actually connects your inner ear to a portion of your body called the *pharynx*. This is the name of the tube extending from the esophagus to the base of your skull into your mouth and

Curing Tinnitus

nasal cavity. (And now you know why they're called "ear, nose and throat" doctors!)

For the vast majority of the time, your Eustachian tubes are closed. But occasionally, they open in response to an involuntary muscular action, like when you swallow or yawn.

One More Task

As if all these tasks weren't enough, I would be remiss if I didn't mention one more function of the middle ear. It transforms the vibrations from those best suited for being transmitted through the air into a type more suited to transmission through fluid. Why does it do that? Because on the opposite side of the oval window is the inner ear, and it's a fluid-filled structure. The fluid it contains is called *perilymph*.

Inside Your Inner Ear

The inner ear also contains several cavities, the majority of which directly affect your equilibrium. One such cavity, called the cochlea, is a spiral-shaped opening resembling a snail's shell. The widest part of the cochlea lies just below the oval window. And just below that, the cochlea links to another window - this one a round window.

The cochlea also contains three tubes. The first is called the scala vestibule. You may also hear it referred to as the vestibular canal. This tube opens to the perilymph of the inner ear.

The second tube is also known by two names - either *scala tympani* or *tympanic canal*. Linking to both the perilymph and the round window, the tympanic canal is connected as well to the scala vestibule through a tiny opening at the end of the cochlea called the *helicotrima*. (Overwhelmed with medical terms yet? I know I am!) This opening is so small that only a very small amount of perilymph fluid can flow through it.

The third tube lies sandwiched between the first two. This is called the *cochlear duct*. And, yes, this too has a second name: *scala media*. Filled with a fluid known as *endolymph*, this tube contains

Curing Tinnitus

the *organ of Corti*. You may also hear this referred to as the spiral organ. It's a complex structure whose job is to convert sound signals into nerve impulses that are ultimately transmitted to the brain through the cochlear nerve.

I've talked quite a bit about the cochlea - and no doubt you remember the term from high school biology. But perhaps you've forgotten the major significance of this structure. It aids in the transformation of sounds from vibrations that travel through air and fluid into nerve impulses the brain recognizes.

From Vibration To Brain

Exactly how does this happen? Vibrations are created when the sound waves reach the stapes of the oval window. These vibrations are transmitted through the perilymph to the scala vestibule of the cochlea. This results in a change of pressure in the scala vestibule as well as in the scala tympani. In turn, the fluctuations in pressure affect the cochlea duct.

The duct becomes distorted due to this pressure change. The distortion also affects a structure called the *tectorial membrane*. This small structure contains some 30,000 sensory cells embedded in it. The distortion tugs at the hair cells. The tension caused by the pulling action triggers the hair cells to set off nerve impulses. It's these nerve cells that are then taken by nerve fibers to be read by the brain.

The Vestibulocochlear Nerve

The sensory impulses which are created in the inner ear are carried to the brain by a structure called the *vestibulocochlear nerve*. (Now that's a mouthful!) Thankfully, it's also known by the terms *auditory nerve* or *acoustic nerve* - both of which are vastly easier to say! This nerve is the eighth in a set of twelve pairs of cranial nerves.

It's composed of two branches. The first is called the *cochlear nerve* which is considered the nerve of hearing. It's the part that causes the impulses originating in the cochlear.

Curing Tinnitus

The other branch is known as the *vestibular nerve*. This structure carries the impulses to and from the various areas of the ear which deal with balance, posture, and movement.

These auditory pathways which connect the ears to the brain have several other "stops" along the trail, where the impulses go through several more processes. More than that, there are also other connections where the two pathways - the left and the right - can actually compare the information when it's received. This action, while it may seem trivial, is actually quite important. It helps the brain detect the direction from which a sound originated.

That's a quick tour around your ear. While there are other tasks the ear has, the information presented here is directly related to tinnitus. At least this gives you an idea of what it takes for sound waves to be converted into something that resembles the voices of your children or grandchildren. Pretty amazing, huh?

Now, we're ready to move on to the next chapter. Are you ready to discover the various types of tinnitus? Yes, believe it or not, there is more than one kind. Why don't you just follow me and we'll check this out together.

Chapter Three: Types of Tinnitus

If you think that all tinnitus is alike, think again! There are several main categories of tinnitus. Not only that, but the problem of ringing in the ears can be classified in several different ways. That means nearly an endless array of possible combinations when it comes to describing your health problem. In this chapter we cover the most common.

What type of tinnitus do you have? Noisy, you say! Well, I suppose any good (or bad) case of ringing in the ears is noisy. But beyond that, how is your tinnitus classified?

Perhaps you didn't realize it, but yes, there are "types" of tinnitus, as strange as it may seem. How the medical community categorizes them depends on several factors, as we'll see in a moment.

But first, let's talk about the four main classifications of tinnitus. The first is referred to as *objective tinnitus*. You may have this type if the noises you hear can be verified by another person. These noises, in fact, are usually emanating from your own body, as strange as that may seem.

By contrast, *subjective tinnitus* is the term used to describe noises only heard by the individual affected. This doesn't mean that the sounds heard by this person don't exist. They are just sounds that can't be verified by an independent observer.

Another method of classification of this disorder is through the amount of distress it causes the person. *Normal tinnitus*, for example, is that in which the symptoms are mild so they aren't causing a disruption in your daily affairs. Your disorder may also be classified as normal tinnitus if the noises only occur on rare occasions. By contrast, *significant tinnitus* implies a degree of severity in which the disorder is disrupting or interfering in your daily routine.

Curing Tinnitus

As you can see, these four initial classifications are not mutually exclusive. One can have objective tinnitus that is also considered normal tinnitus or subjective tinnitus that's also categorized as significant tinnitus.

A Deeper Look At Objective Tinnitus

Many individuals who suffer from objective tinnitus are told that many of the processes occurring in their body are not silent ones. Not only are they not quiet, but that's exactly what these people are hearing - the sounds of the body.

Initially, it seems like this description should be a low-grade science fiction movie. But let's just look at one sound that we know emanates from our physical bodies: our heartbeat.

Each time you visit your doctor they listen for your heartbeat with their trusty stethoscope. Your heart beats, your blood "whooshes" through your arteries, joints creak, and stomachs growl.

Well, I'm sure you get the idea. If you really gave it some thought, the body is probably far from silent.

But let's face it, most of us, unless we have an instrument which amplifies sounds, just don't hear any of this. Why? For one thing, many of these sounds are in areas where it's really difficult to hear them. You might say these noises are in parts of the body that are "well insulated". Many times, muscles or other tissues surround the activity. These tissues and muscles effectively capture and contain the vibrations which, in turn, create the sounds.

There are several other reasons why you don't hear these noises. Your brain has the marvelous ability to simply tune them out.

That's right! Your brain makes a judgment, so to speak: relevant or irrelevant sound. (Sounds like a new game show!) It then makes the decision to filter out all the irrelevant sounds. To you, it's as if the noises never existed at all.

The brain actually makes another decision too. The brain ignores sounds produced with incessant regularity - like the beating of

Curing Tinnitus

your heart. Otherwise you would be listening to that sound day in and day out. Imagine not being able to sleep because your heart was beating too loud!

There is yet another remarkable aspect to how the brain filters your body's noises. It can recognize when your body's normal sounds abruptly change which may signal a potential health problem. If that happens, it lets you know, so you can actually begin hearing the sound. This is an ingenious way of letting you know something might be wrong with your body.

Here's a great example. An individual with a wheezy chest may normally not hear this sound. But should the wheeze change in any way, the brain can stop this filtering process so the individual can hear it. This is a subtle hint that the person should visit their physician or make lifestyle changes.

Listen To... Your Circulatory System?

That's exactly what you may be listening to if you've been diagnosed with objective tinnitus. For many people, the circulatory system is the origin of the sounds they hear.

In fact, most people are actually hearing the blood flowing through the larger veins in the head. Other individuals hear the smaller vessels near the ear - especially those leading into the inner ear.

Other people actually do hear the beating of their heart. Detecting the source of this tinnitus is relatively easy. The noise you hear is synchronized closely with your heartbeat.

The second most common sound within the body that's audible is your skeleton. Obviously all joints can potentially create sounds (and we're all too familiar with that as we age!). But there are certain areas within the body that people seem to hear with greater frequency. These include the jaw, back, shoulders and neck. Few people actually hear the sound of their joints in such distant locations from their ears as the knees or the toes. While it's rare, some individuals discover the source of their tinnitus is due to the sounds of their muscles. Usually, these

Curing Tinnitus

individuals hear the contraction of their soft palate.

Subjective Tinnitus

What if no source for the noise can be found? If that's the case, the disorder is classified as *subjective tinnitus*. However, keep in mind that this classification may not be as accurate as you may think.

The fact that no source within your body or outside your body can be pinpointed as the cause of your sounds doesn't mean there is no physical origin for them. In other words, don't think that you're merely hearing imaginary noises.

It may be the body sounds you're hearing are so deeply buried that the medical community has yet to develop tools by which to hear them. The source, at this point in time, simply can't be found.

Significant Tinnitus

This brings us to the second dichotomy in tinnitus classification: *significant tinnitus* and *normal tinnitus*. You may think placing the disorder in one category or another is easy, but these categories can begin to get quite blurry.

The diagnosing physician, it seems, is dependent on the reporting of the patient in making this decision. You might expect significant tinnitus to be restricted to those instances in which the noise a person hears is described as loud, incessant and totally irksome. By contrast, you may believe that normal tinnitus is faint and infrequent.

It just doesn't seem to work that way, though. There's actually a vast chasm sometimes between the noise that some people consider distressing and others find mildly irritating.

Some individuals are extremely bothered by noises which they described as faint or even occasional. Others are barely upset despite the fact that they hear loud and constant noises.

Even with those variations, the medical community can make some generalizations - at least enough to create a rough classification.

Curing Tinnitus

Generally speaking, the more frequently a person experiences this noise, the more irritating and troublesome it is for them.

Just as the frequency and volume of tinnitus varies with the individual, so do the ways it appears to you and the length of the affliction.

Some individuals report that the sounds are their constant companion. Some even claim they hear these sounds in their sleep. Others say they rarely hear the sounds, reporting their appearance as infrequently as once every several months. Most people report the noises decrease in their intensity now and again. The only pattern to all of this is that there seems to be no pattern.

One Ear Or Two?

Depending on the cause of the tinnitus, you may only experience it in one of your ears. Or you could hear it in both ears. Some people even say the sounds shift from one ear to another.

All thee incidents are common. And "what ear hears what" may actually be of great help in determining the underlying cause of your disorder.

The Sensation of Sound

In some instances, those who suffer with tinnitus report they don't "hear" the noise as much as they sense it. The sensation of sound, they report, comes from somewhere in their heads.

Most people say they hear only one type of noise even though the volume or intensity may vary. They say the noise may grow louder or softer, or it may change its pitch, but it is always the same recognizable sound - only a variation of it.

By contrast, fewer tinnitus sufferers say the sounds show up in different forms. For some people, they hear one type of sound in one case and the next time, the sound may be a totally different noise. And then there are some that say they hear two or more sounds at the same time.

So what causes tinnitus? Why do some people hear the sound their bodies are making when others don't? We explore some of the causes of this disorder in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Causes And Prevention of Tinnitus

No single cause of tinnitus exists. In this chapter we examine at least seven of them. But when you learn the cause of your tinnitus, in many ways you already have the remedy to it. So dig in to find out if the ringing in your ears is produced by any of these causes. If it is, you can begin RIGHT NOW in reducing or even eliminating that constant noise in your ears!

Love your ear muffs. Oh, you're trying to avoid loud noises? And you really believe that's going to help? Oh, loud noises are the cause of your tinnitus? Well, at least your ears will stay warm!

Our friend above isn't alone in believing her tinnitus is caused by exposure to loud noises. It appears that loud noises rank high on everyone's belief system. It's well known that noise can, and does, cause damage to the ears. The types of noises which are most damaging are divided into two broad categories.

The first is the damage which results from a single incident that involves exposure to a loud and sudden noise. Think explosion or gunfire here. This damage usually occurs shortly after the incident if not upon immediate exposure to the sound.

Your hearing can also be damaged slowly with repeated and prolonged exposure to loud noises such as those sounds found in a loud manufacturing plant.

In some cases, an individual's hearing damage is due to exposure to both types of noises - the abrupt and the prolonged. For

Curing Tinnitus

example, take the case of Ned. He served in the military where he heard his fair share of gunfire, up close and loud gunfire. When discharged from the military, he worked in a loud automobile factory. Now he complains of ringing in his ears. It would be difficult to choose one type of cause over the other in his case.

The other difficulty in diagnosing noise as a cause of this disorder involves the onset of hearing loss. For most of us, hearing loss appears slowly over many years. This makes it difficult to link cause and effect with tinnitus.

Preventing Noise-Induced Damaged

You're absolutely right. The suggestions I'm about to list are anything but new. But they are still great suggestions nonetheless. Even more, they represent some of the best methods in tinnitus prevention. Why not challenge yourself to see how many of these you and your family can follow?

Ear protectors.

No doubt about it. Wear them at work if you work in a noisy environment. Your employer should provide you with a pair. Maybe they already have. Use them.

And don't overlook ear protectors at other events where you're exposed to loud sounds, like at stock car races. Manufacturers create all kinds of clever inventions just for these events.

Personal Radios and iPods

Aren't we all guilty of this? You place the ear buds in your ears just to be blasted to kingdom come. Before placing those buds in your ears make sure the volume on the device is turned down.

Car Radios and CD Players

Same thing with the car radio or the CD player. How many times have you jumped in the car and turned on the ignition just to be blasted back several feet by the volume of the radio or CD player?

Curing Tinnitus

Before you exit your car the next time, remember to turn that volume down a bit.

I could also recommend you not play the music so loud during your next commute or round of errands. But would you really listen to me?

Concerts and other loud entertainment

Oh, you knew this one was coming. As tempting as it might be, don't get too close to that stage. The nearer you are, the louder the sound, and the greater the risk of damaging your ears and hearing.

Monitor Your Hearing

Hearing loss is insidious. It sneaks up on you slowly. And this is especially true if you work in a noisy environment. So, be sure to get your hearing checked regularly.

The Aging Process.

Like it or not (and most of us don't), we all age. And along with the aging process comes some type of hearing loss. And you don't even have to have been exposed to loud abrupt noises to experience this.

As you age, you have a tendency to lose the ability to hear the higher pitched sounds. Initially this loss isn't that noticeable. The sound range that we have difficulty hearing isn't that important to us. As the aging process continues, however, the ranges you lose are more critical. The loss begins to affect the middle range of your hearing - the range between 500 and 3,000 Hz. This is the area where much of our speech falls.

As a result, you may experience difficulty in hearing words - or at least parts of them. The spoken English language is ripe with pitch fluctuations. Usually we enunciate the consonants at a higher pitch than the vowels. That's why the initial signal of possible hearing loss is the inability to hear an occasional consonant.

Curing Tinnitus

A second classic signal that you may be experiencing hearing loss is the separation of sounds. This may surface by the inability to pick out one voice for another in a general conversation.

Is It Age-Related Hearing Loss?

How can you tell if your hearing loss is age-related? It can be difficult to differentiate among the various causes of hearing loss, but there are two points to keep in mind. The first is loss which begins at age 60 or later. Age-related hearing loss is rare before a person reaches the age of 60.

It's a very slow process and is inevitably caused by the slow degeneration of your hair cells and nerve fibers in the organ of Corti. The damage, as we've mentioned, is limited to the highest tones.

Ironically, once you notice the loss, then it seems as if your hearing rapidly declines. Very few people who are older than 70, in fact, are capable of distinguishing sounds very much higher than the highest note on a piano.

Loudness Recruitment

If you are experiencing what's called "loudness recruitment", you can expect larger variations in the volumes of your hearing than what actually exists.

If you have this symptom, your hearing is poor when the sounds are of a low intensity. In this instance, intensity refers to the distance separating you, as the listener, from the source of the sound.

What's more, your hearing improves as the intensity increases or as you get closer to the source. The improvement, by the way, is greater than what would normally accompany the differences in distance.

The medical community doesn't fully understand why this occurs, although there are a few theories. Some experts believe the brain

Curing Tinnitus

increases your ear's sensitivity to the audible range of frequencies. This is a natural attempt, they believe, to compensate for the loss of the higher ranges of frequencies.

On the surface, it sounds like a brilliant strategy. And it really is - in theory at least. When you actually put it into practice, however, you discover a few flaws.

For starters, this situation places an overemphasis on the normal volume variations in ordinary speech. This sometimes makes it even more difficult for a person with hearing loss to hear properly.

It's also the reason why if you raise your voice while speaking to the individual, you may be accused of shouting at him or her.

Loudness recruitment contributes many times to the development of tinnitus. Recruitment intensifies the sensitivity to certain frequencies which would otherwise be too low to even be noticed.

Think of it like a recording. Sometimes when you turn the volume up loud enough, you'll hear hisses or static on even very low sounds in the background you normally wouldn't notice.

When Good Earwax Goes Bad

Earwax is definitely not a topic that normally fills a long silence at a cocktail party, unless, of course, you're a junior high school boy trying to get a reaction from an adult!

But earwax or *cerumen* as the medical community calls it, can contribute to tinnitus.

Oh, yes. I know I told you earlier earwax is our friend. And it is. However, sometimes you can get too much of a good friend. So it is with earwax.

Normally, this substance performs several vital purposes. First, it provides a necessary barrier against potential infection. Earwax traps dust as well as small foreign particles.

Curing Tinnitus

It also helps to keep the ear canals supple and keeps excessive moisture out.

You can also thank your earwax for keeping insects out of your ears. It's true! The insects get trapped in the wax before they can reach the ear drum where they could do real damage.

But, what happens to earwax when it gets compacted, accumulates to excess, or hardens? And what happens to your hearing?

In most situations, any of the scenarios would only be temporary. Eventually, the ears will clean themselves. But every now and then the "self cleaning" process fails. It's at this point that the wax build-up may cause tinnitus or even deafness.

Removing Excessive Earwax

Of course, before that happens, you should get the wax removed. But don't even try to do it by placing some foreign object into your ears. When I was a child, I remember a saying that warned me, "Never put anything smaller than your elbow in your ear." As weird or clever as it may be, it's very true.

Why should you not pull earwax out yourself? For one thing, instead of pulling it out, it's almost certain the opposite will occur. You'll push it up farther and compact it, which only makes it more difficult to extract.

But more than that, the instrument you choose - whether it's a cotton swab or even the edge of a towel - carries the potential to irritate your ear's canal lining. And the end result of that is even more earwax.

And of course you don't have to be told that the largest consequence that looms over this seemingly small habit is the rupturing of your ear drum.

Yes, I know the stores are filled with possible "home remedies" for your earwax problems. But the best steps you can take are those which bypass that aisle altogether. Instead, go directly to your physician.

Curing Tinnitus

Not only will he ensure that you're dealing with a build-up of wax, but he'll schedule a professional wax-removing session for you with a qualified nurse.

Only You Can Prevent Earwax Build Up

You may get the impression that you're totally helpless when it comes to the accumulation of earwax. But that's far from the truth.

I'll now share with you a few of the steps you can take to prevent earwax build up or to remove it when it gets to be too much. The first involves, believe it or not, warm olive oil. That's right. And yes, you can imagine what you're about to do with it.

Simply place a few drops of warm olive oil - not hot, please! - in each ear with an eye dropper. The easiest way to do this is to stand in front of a mirror, tilting your head to one side.

Place a piece of cotton in each ear so the oil doesn't run out. (Remember, you don't want the cotton to be so small that it gets stuck in your ear canal.)

Keep the cotton in your ears for about 20 minutes. By that time the warmed oil should have melted the wax. As a preventive measure, do this about once a month.

Did you know that a major contributor to earwax is water entering the ear? You can easily prevent this by wearing earplugs when swimming. You may also want to plug your ears with cotton when you're showering or washing your hair. Even with these measures, be sure that your shower head is never aimed directly at your ear.

Is The Cure Part Of The Problem?

Some medical experts are beginning to think that just might be the case. You can go to the doctor for a professional ear cleaning. The process includes injecting warm water into your ear. Many

Curing Tinnitus

individuals, though, reported they develop tinnitus shortly following this experience.

While many individuals have claimed this, the medical community does not believe that syringing the ear is actually the cause of the tinnitus.

If you asked the experts why they don't believe the cleaning method caused the problem, you'd receive one of two explanations.

Many medical experts will tell you right up front if you had risk factors for developing tinnitus - even before the syringing took place.

Others explain that the presence of the wax alone created the ringing of the ear. The clearing of that wax only made the individual more aware of noises already present. In effect, they say that the faint noises of tinnitus were there all the time. It was just the cleaning of the wax which made it more noticeable.

Inheriting Otosclerosis

Many times those individuals who inherited the disorder otosclerosis, are plagued with tinnitus as well. Otosclerosis, the presence of extra bone in the inner ear, usually doesn't show up until late adolescence.

Many times, this overgrowth of cartilage restricts the movement of the ossicles of the middle ear, especially the stapes. It's not unusual for the stapes to adhere to the oval window.

This disorder needs to be treated because it is progressive. If left untreated it eventually evolves into a deeper deafness due to the impairment of the transmission of sound vibrations.

It's very possible for an individual to have both otosclerosis and tinnitus at the same time, each having quite separate causes. If, however, the presence of the tinnitus is due to the overgrowth, the resulting noises will be low-pitched.

Curing Tinnitus

Older than 50? It Could Be Meniere's Disease

Are you 50 or older? The tinnitus, vertigo, vomiting and even deafness you experience may be the symptoms of Meniere's Disease or Meniere's Syndrome.

The disorder results from an increase in the amount of fluid in the semicircular canals of the inner ears, which is the portion of the ear controlling your balance and determining your body position.

The excessive fluid not only damages the canals, but it very often injures the cochlea. When this happens, individuals will also be plagued with difficulty perceiving sounds in addition to the presence of tinnitus.

Deafness caused by Meniere's Disease is different than other hearing loss in two vital ways. It affects the low-frequency range sounds and is more often than not accompanied by noise recruitment.

The initial sign of Meniere's Disease is normally the appearance of vertigo. In some instances the vertigo attack is so severe that the individual collapses. Many later recall that prior to the attack they felt, at the very least, mild discomfort, and at worst, pain in the ears.

Many times tinnitus also preceded the vertigo. Just how long and how often the vertigo attacks occur varies with the individual, but stays constant in the hearing loss and the tinnitus.

The medical community still doesn't know the cause of Meniere's Disease. Many times these experts can trace the origin to some food allergy, a viral infection, or even a sluggish thyroid or adrenal glands. Sometimes the cause is linked to the presence of syphilis.

In other cases, the medical experts believe Meniere's Disease may be caused by either diabetes or high blood pressure.

Once the cause is pinpointed, the efforts to treat it can begin. In cases where there's an underlying problem like high blood

Curing Tinnitus

pressure, treating that specific condition usually cures the Meniere's Disease.

In many cases, treatment is comprised of mostly medication. One of the most common types of drugs is called beta histine hydrochloride. If detected and treated early enough, the possibility exists for a reversal of the problem.

If left untreated, the condition only worsens. Meniere's Disease may lead even to total deafness, though the vertigo and tinnitus may disappear.

High Blood Pressure? It Depends...

...on who you speak with. The medical community debates the extent in which high blood pressure contributes to tinnitus. Certainly if the rise in blood pressure eventually causes Meniere's Disease, then a decisive link is established.

In many other situations, though, the connection is more tenuous. In fact, the supposed link of the two is, in many cases, based more on observation than any physical evidence. The observations are noted both when the individual has high blood pressure and when it has returned to normal.

Many individuals who complained of tinnitus when their blood pressure was high, found relief from the noises in their ears when the blood pressure levels were restored to normal.

It's clear that high blood pressure may be contributing to a person's tinnitus. Just consider these facts. High blood pressure means that your blood is being pushed through your system at a higher than normal level. This can mean more intense sounds emanating from your circulatory system.

This is especially true if the tinnitus is of the *pulsatile* type, then the noises heard are no doubt synchronized with your blood pressure.

Curing Tinnitus

The source of the tinnitus might be due to the blood being pushed through the very fine arteries that supply the ear itself.

If you are experiencing tinnitus and you also know for a fact you have high blood pressure, the odds are favorable that improving the blood pressure will clear the tinnitus.

Prevention

This brings us to the prevention of tinnitus. It may seem all too logical that the prevention of tinnitus goes hand in hand with preventing high blood pressure.

Depending on the severity of your high blood pressure, you may take prescription medication which should effectively reduce your blood pressure levels. If you possess only a mild case of high blood pressure, reducing it through exercise and changes in your eating habits should eliminate the noises in your ear as well.

Take a good, hard, and above all honest look at your lifestyle. The fact is that stress, as well as the presence of anxiety, causes a raise in blood pressure for many. These factors may also be affecting your tinnitus as well.

Programs abound to help you manage your stress intelligently. By participating in any of these programs you are not only increasing the chances of restoring your blood pressure to normal levels, but reducing the noises in your ears as well.

Tinnitus and Other Disorders

The development of tinnitus has been known to be caused by the presence of several other health conditions as well. Below you'll find only a few of the possible disorders which may also cause your tinnitus.

The presence of a tumor - and not necessarily a cancerous one - may trigger the development of tinnitus. In fact one such tumor is called an *acoustic neuroma*, which very often causes tinnitus. The

Curing Tinnitus

tumor occurs in the fibrous sheath covering the eighth cranial nerve. This is the one linking the inner ear with the brain.

If this is the cause of the noises in your head, you're probably experiencing vertigo at the same time. A branch of the nerve affected by the tumor carries signals from the organs of balance in the ear. As a rule, only one ear is affected.

The good news is that acoustic neuroma is removable through surgery. The bad news is that the related tinnitus disappears in only approximately half of the cases.

Out Of Sync Thyroid

Your thyroid gland controls your metabolic rate through the release of a variety of essential hormones. A thyroid gland that refuses to function properly - working too slowly or operating overtime - may be the source of the ringing in your ears.

Diabetes

Diabetes, which may cause Meniere's Disease, can also cause tinnitus. This is the health condition in which the cells of your body cannot utilize glucose as a fuel due to a shortage of insulin. It is only now being discovered that an abnormally high number of diabetics also suffer from tinnitus.

Multiple Sclerosis

Also known as *disseminated sclerosis*, this is a chronic disease of the central nervous system. It mainly affects young and middle-aged adults. MS damages the myelin sheaths which envelop the nerves in the brain and the spinal cord. Should the condition spread to affecting the nerves which link the brain and the ears, it may indeed be the source of ringing in the ears.

Meningitis

Meningitis is an inflammation of the connective tissue membranes lining the skull and vertebral canal. Usually the first indication of

Curing Tinnitus

the swelling is the development of noises in the ear. Other symptoms of meningitis include a rigidity of muscles, severe headaches, and a poor appetite. In severe cases of this condition, many experience convulsions.

Head Injuries

Many individuals can trace the start of their tinnitus to a head injury. This seems to be especially true if the individual had to undergo surgery for the injury.

It's possible that your tinnitus is not caused by any of these, and in the following chapter we discuss three more possible causes of tinnitus. Not only are these causes plausible, but they may be more common than you think. Easily overlooked, your tinnitus may be more easily cured than you imagined.

Chapter Five: Hidden Causes of Tinnitus

Um, excuse me. But did you know you've traded in those ear muffs for, well, two pillows tied to either side of your head? Oh, you are aware of them? Well, I don't think that's going to make the sounds in your ears go away anytime soon.

If you're like our friend above, perhaps you've discovered that you have none of the related problems that may cause tinnitus. You just couldn't find your situation in the descriptions already presented.

Does that mean that your particular condition is hopeless? I suppose you could look at it that way. But I have a better idea. Let's look at several more options before you throw in the towel.

These are what I call the secret causes of tinnitus. They include circumstances that have been, for some individuals, targeted as the causes of their ringing in their ears. But they are also circumstances all of us are exposed to. Perhaps one or more of these situations may be the source of your tinnitus too.

Before you dismiss this possibility as a trigger for tinnitus, read this section over at least once. Food allergies, for example, are a growing problem in today's society.

Fifty years ago this wasn't the case. Today, as more additives and flavorings are dumped into a wider variety of foods, more people experience allergies. And the sad part is that most individuals don't even realize they are the source of many problems.

Few medical professional today doubt the presence of a food allergy as a tinnitus trigger. If the foods you eat don't actually cause tinnitus, the consumption of them, many times, makes the existing sounds worse.

Curing Tinnitus

Unfortunately proving it as a cause and the discovering the food or foods that are the culprits can be downright taxing and depressing.

The presence of a food allergy is an individualistic problem. There only seems to be one rule when dealing with the problem of food allergies: There are no rules. So the options appear endless.

While that may indeed be true, there are some foods that are more commonly associated with the presence of tinnitus.

That Morning Cup Of Joe

Oh, I don't have any food allergies, you say, sipping on your cup of coffee. If I were allergic to a certain food, you contend, I would be breaking out in hives or some type of rash. Wouldn't I?

Don't be too sure about that. When you hear the word "allergy", your mind reflexively flashes to rashes and red blotchy patches over all of your body.

Food allergies seldom appear in that form. While there are times that certain foods may affect you like that, more often allergies reveal themselves in a wide variety of much more subtle ways.

Many times, one of those reactions is the development of tinnitus. You can't know for certain what foods you're allergic to without visiting an allergist, but specific foods have a history of producing tinnitus.

Caffeinated beverages top the list. Coffee. Tea. Soft drinks. These contain the most caffeine. Don't let anyone fool you either. Caffeine really is a powerful stimulant.

Caffeine, initially, gives you an energy boost. But that "caffeine high" eventually is followed by an "after-caffeine crash". You know what happens next. You end up taking more of the stimulant to get you moving again.

Not only is caffeine a powerful stimulant but the traveling from the heights of a caffeine high to the depths of the caffeine crash can also produce anxiety.

Curing Tinnitus

If you think that your tinnitus might be triggered by caffeine, switch to decaffeinated beverages. You may want to steer clear of drinks containing caffeine for a week or two. If your tinnitus improves, you've found the cause of your health condition.

But it's not just the obvious drinks that contain caffeine. You can find it in many foods and even some over-the-counter medications. Be sure to limit these various foods when testing your caffeine hypothesis.

Cocoa, by the way, is another food which is thought to produce tinnitus. This food is mostly found as an ingredient in pastries, chocolate drinks and cakes. You'll also find cocoa in many processed and packaged foods. (Here's another reason to reduce the amount of desserts you eat!)

And Yet Another Reason To Limit Your Saturated Fat Intake

Saturated fats. Yes, here's just one more health reason to limit your consumption of foods like steak, hard cheeses and junk foods. Foods with an abundance of this fat have always been associated with a rise in your cholesterol levels, and are now also linked to tinnitus.

Of course, you'll recall that tinnitus and high blood pressure have been linked, so it should really not come as much of a surprise that an increase in the consumption of saturated fats may also cause tinnitus.

Yes, Alcohol!

Yes, there are many reasons not to overindulge in alcohol and now you can add tinnitus to them. This is especially true if your tinnitus is due to anxiety or stress. Drink too much alcohol and you may very well find you have a good case of tinnitus. If you already had the problem before you drank, chances are good your indiscretion will only intensify the noises in your ears.

Curiously, though, if you drink sensibly and responsibly, you may find your tinnitus improves - if only slightly. (I'll drink to that!)

Natural Hidden Secrets Revealed

Curing Tinnitus

The reason for this is actually quite simple. Alcohol is really a sedative. A small amount of alcohol relaxes you. Too much...well, we all know what too much can do!

Pass The Salt... Right Past Me, Please!

Here's another food that is found everywhere. The reputation of salt as a health food was tarnished decades ago. We're just adding one more health condition on to it. In fact, it could very well be salt's ability to raise your blood pressure that also gives it the ability to either trigger or worsen your tinnitus.

If you discover the ringing in your ears increases when you use salt, keep in mind that processed and packaged foods can be laden with sodium. The best move you can make, then, is to eliminate or at least limit, your consumption of these foods.

What? Sugar, Too?

Sorry. But, yep, sugar too! Too much sugar, in fact, may also lead to hearing loss, according to recent research. Some scientists say this occurs because sugar promotes the release of adrenaline. This, in turn, reduces the oxygenated blood supply to the inner ear, constricting your smaller arteries.

Reducing sugar intake and related refined carbohydrates improves your hearing as well as your tinnitus.

Food Allergies!

Any food allergy. Research is now revealing that certain individuals can be allergic to just about any food. And what's more, that allergy can show up in the form of tinnitus or even in hearing impairment.

Generally, food allergies are blamed for episodes of inflammation of the inner ear. If left untreated, the condition may eventually damage the ossicles.

Curing Tinnitus

Consider the results of just one study. Researchers took 100 individuals complaining of frequent or chronic ear infections. More than 75 percent of them were allergic to at least one, and in some cases multiple, common foods.

Once these foods were taken out of their diet, three out of four of these individuals either reported no further ear infections or experienced far fewer episodes of ringing in the ears.

What were the foods most frequently seen as causing inner ear infections? Wheat. Soy beans. Peanuts. Eggs. Milk.

To many in the medical community, and especially natural health advocates, this comes as no surprise. These foods are regularly implicated in triggering tinnitus.

But if you listen closely to those individuals who suffer from tinnitus, it appears that just about any food can make tinnitus worse. There seems to be no rhyme or reason when it comes to which foods are most likely to trigger or worsen that incessant ringing in the ears.

If you have reason to believe that some food in your diet may be causing your ear condition, try staying away from it for at least two weeks. If you notice no improvement, move on to eliminating another food from your diet that you suspect might be the cause. Continue this pattern until you've eliminated all foods that are on your "suspect list".

The Value Of A Food Diary

Should you still not find the food that triggers your tinnitus and you really suspect a food allergy, then many natural health advocates recommend you keep a food diary. In this journal, record not only the foods you eat and when, but also your bouts with tinnitus. Record when you first notice the noise, how severe it is, and of course, what day and time it was. Your goal here is to find a pattern or some type of connection between the foods you eat and the presence of the ringing in your ears.

Curing Tinnitus

Keep this record for at least two weeks (longer would be even better!). Study your entries. Compare them. Most people discover that something pops out at them.

In some cases the link may not be obvious. If that's you, then you need to know that sometimes a substantial delay exists between cause and effect. The delay may be as long as three days or more!

Drugs and Tinnitus

It seems unfair, now doesn't it? After all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, were created for the sole purpose of improving your health - certainly not making it worse. But that's exactly what happens for some plagued with tinnitus.

Not only have some medications been implicated in causing or worsening tinnitus, some are even the cause of the problem. But that's only a small part of the story. Many times tinnitus occurs when certain combinations of drugs are used together. This is just one more very good reason to ensure you provide your healthcare practitioner with all of the drugs you're currently using, both prescription and over-the-counter.

You may be surprised to learn that, according to a recent international tinnitus symposium, more than 100 drugs have been found to be associated with either ringing in the ears or some type of hearing loss.

Keep in mind, though, that these drugs only affected the hearing of a small fraction of those who took them. In some instances, individuals failed to follow the written instructions which accompanied the drugs, taking the medications in higher than recommended doses.

Tinnitus and Aspirin

Having said that, there are certain drugs that are notorious for causing tinnitus. The first is aspirin. Yep, aspirin. Who would have thought this relatively harmless painkiller could potentially affect your hearing?

Curing Tinnitus

Those affected with aspirin-related tinnitus say the sounds they hear are normally high pitched. Generally, aspirin is usually harmless unless taken in large doses. Not only that, but these large quantities - usually several times the recommended dosage - need to be taken for an extended period of time before it affects you in terms of tinnitus.

On the flip side of this, I would be remiss if I failed to point out that in some instances, individuals who had complained of chronic and severe tinnitus discovered that aspirin at least partially alleviated this problem.

Thinking of switching from aspirin to ibuprofen (you may know this over-the-counter pain killer better by its brand name of Motrin or Advil)? Think again! Evidence is slowly accumulating that ibuprofen as well as a medication called indomethacin may also contribute to the development of tinnitus. Both of these drugs are used to control the moderate pain and inflammation associated with rheumatoid arthritis and related rheumatic diseases.

Those antibiotics may be the cause of your tinnitus. As you well know, antibiotics inhibit or destroy the growth of microorganisms and are used to treat many bacterial and fungal infections.

The last thing I want to do is dissuade people from taking antibiotics. The discovery and development of antibiotics has saved untold lives. But you also need to know that for some people these wonder drugs may also cause a ringing in the ears.

No formal research has been performed in this area, so the medical profession is unsure why this happens, but many have reported the problem.

Another drug that carries the risk of tinnitus as an adverse side effect is the antidepressant. Ironic, isn't it? Many medical professionals actually treat tinnitus by prescribing an antidepressant (see Chapter One) when the disorder stems from anxiety, stress or depression.

If your physician has prescribed an antidepressant, try to pinpoint when your tinnitus began. Is it around the time you started taking

Curing Tinnitus

this prescription drug? Be sure to report this to your healthcare provider.

Perhaps you're taking a diuretic. This is a type of medication which purposely increases the volume of your urine. It essentially works by promoting the excretion of salts and water from the kidneys.

This specific type of drug has also been associated with causing or worsening tinnitus.

Pot? Weed? Marijuana? Whatever You Call It!

Cannabis. Marijuana. Whatever you want to name this plant, it can still produce a ringing in your ears if you smoke it. Since the use of marijuana is illegal, no studies exist proving this. But enough anecdotal and circumstantial evidence exists to verify this statement. Whether the ringing in the ears is permanent or transitory has not been determined yet.

Cigarettes

Yep. If you indulge in the nicotine habit and experience ringing in the ears, it might be more than just coincidental. Most ear specialists now realize that, at the very least, smoking worsens an existing case of tinnitus. But will kicking the habit actually relieve that ringing sound? It's hard to say. What the medical community *does* know is that smokers report an improvement in their tinnitus once they quit. While compared to the other hazards associated with smoking, this is a mild side effect, but it's still one more reason to consider quitting.

But wait! Here's the kicker (and don't let this stop you from trying to quit!). Other individuals report the stress of trying to quit smoking actually made their tinnitus worse. Go figure.

Well, did you see any possible causes of your tinnitus in this list? I'm sure one or two look promising.

Now, we're up to my favorite part of the book: providing you with natural secret remedies used successfully by others.

No you won't find these recommendations listed in anything your conventional doctor may hand you in regards to tinnitus. That doesn't mean they won't work to relieve those incessant noises in your ear - regardless of the cause.

The even better news is that you don't even need to know the cause of your tinnitus with some of these remedies. Even if you're at a loss as to why you're bothered with the noises, you can still find something that may work wonders for you. Others have!

Let's dig right in! What are we waiting for?

Chapter Six: Natural Secrets To Curing Tinnitus

Diet and nutritional supplements are only two of the methods this chapter suggests as possible alternative treatments for your tinnitus. We also recommend aromatherapy, acupressure, acupuncture and even reflexology. But the treatments don't end there. You'll just have to read the chapter to discover all the possibilities...

Eliminated sugar? Check. Eliminated salt? Check. But you say you're still suffering from lingering tinnitus? The sounds just aren't improving as much as you had hoped they would? Not to worry. We've still got a few tricks up our sleeve!

We've already mentioned how reducing or eliminating salt and sugar from your diet may have a positive effect on that incessant ringing sound in your ears.

But did you know that making several further changes in your eating habits may also improve your tinnitus?

Curing Tinnitus

Cure Tinnitus With... Diet?

As implausible as you may think it is, many natural health healers are now suggesting that many of the foods you eat - or in some cases the food you don't eat - may be at the root cause of your tinnitus.

We've already talked about the roles of sugar and salt in promoting your health condition. So the idea of revamping your diet shouldn't come as too much of a surprise. Of course, I realize that this is something that is so easy to say and sometimes is a little more difficult to implement.

But if you can, the rewards may be tremendous. Not only do you have a chance at finally getting rid of that noisy buzzing in your ears, but you will also be providing your entire body with some healthy, nourishing food. Now that's what I call a win-win situation.

Even mainstream scientists are now beginning to recognize that what you eat and the development of tinnitus are related. For one thing, that sound in your ears may be a symptom of arteriosclerosis or high blood pressure. And many times these diseases are due to a poor diet.

It only makes sense that if you improve your diet to help improve your symptoms of high blood pressure that your tinnitus will diminish or dissipate altogether.

What types of foods promote arteriosclerosis and high blood pressure? They include much red meat, refined flours and sugars, as well as an abundance of processed foods. (And that's just for starters!)

Curing Tinnitus

Adopting New Dietary Habits

Well, if changing your diet helps those other health conditions, it might have an influence on your tinnitus. Your only question now: what's left to eat? (Lots of people ask that!)

The answer to that is *plenty*. But before we even talk about "replacement" meals, let's mention a four-letter word: fast. And I'm not talking about the opposite of slow.

Many natural health providers strongly urge their clients with tinnitus to not only attempt to give up the unhealthy food, but to attempt to go on a three-day fruit and vegetable juice fast.

The purpose of this is to clear the ear of any clogging mucus which may be lingering in there. Following this juice fast, they suggest four weeks of garlic juice in addition to your meals. Garlic, as you probably know, has been reputed to lower blood pressure. It dilates and relaxes tiny blood vessels.

While the diet suggested isn't very detailed, it does require some thought and discipline. You want to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. You don't need to become a vegetarian (although many people would say you should!).

Just be sure to replace those packaged and processed foods with whole foods, fruits and vegetables. You also want to drastically reduce your consumption of foods with saturated fats, as well as vegetable shortening and margarine. You'll be surprised at the improvement in your tinnitus by only doing this!

Some of the foods you want to ensure you eat are those rich in magnesium and potassium. Some of them include:

- Apricots
- Nuts
- Bananas
- Leafy greens
- Beets

Curing Tinnitus

Diabetes and Tinnitus

Let's revisit our warning about the consumption of sugar. We've briefly talked about the apparent link between tinnitus and refined white sugar, but we didn't emphasize it, and I certainly don't want it to "go in one ear and out the other"! Research is providing us with mounting evidence of a connection between the two. The two are linked through your body's inability to metabolize sugar, at least in some cases.

Recently, a study from Brazil revealed a direct link between your body's inability to metabolize sugar and the degenerative diseases, diabetes and tinnitus.

In fact, the study showed that between 84 and 92 percent of those individuals studied complaining of tinnitus also had a metabolic disorder called *hyperinsulinemia*. (Now, there's a mouthful of word for you!)

Hyperinsulinemia refers to an elevation of insulin levels in your bloodstream. This disorder is a direct consequence of insulin resistance, a precursor to diabetes. In a nutshell, insulin is being transferred improperly from the bloodstream to the cells. This means the pancreas produces more insulin to lower the glucose levels. In turn, insulin levels rise even more.

B-Complex Vitamins

Adopting a new diet is only part of your dietary recovery plan. It's a great first step, no doubt about it. But you'll also want to strengthen your efforts by augmenting your diet with certain nutritional supplements. A marvelous place to start is with the B-complex of vitamins. This family of nutrients has been known to help stop the ringing in your ears.

Of these vitamins, choose B12, B6 and B5 - better known as pantothenic acid. In fact, you'll want to take 50 mg of B6 at least twice a day and if possible, three times a day. Natural healers say that this helps to stabilize the fluids of your inner ears.

Curing Tinnitus

Another natural way to ensure your body receives B6, is through eating an abundance of whole grain products, eggs, dairy products, and bananas to name just a few.

B12 is extremely important as well. Recent research is showing that more people than originally thought are both suffering from tinnitus and a B12 deficiency. Not only that, but this deficiency has been reported to be common in people whose tinnitus is caused by the continued loud environment of their workplace.

Injectable vitamin B12 can only be bought through prescription only. Unfortunately, no research exists for the oral variety on tinnitus. Nutritionists suggest that you receive 6 mcg of B12 daily. This vitamin can be consumed through eggs, milk and milk products, fish, poultry, lamb, oysters, and even yeast.

Vitamin A

Vitamin A is vital for the health of your ear membranes. A deficiency of this nutrient can in many cases lead to tinnitus.

Good sources of this vitamin include oily fish, blueberries and dark green leafy vegetables. Additionally, the "yellow" vegetables are rich in vitamin A. These include carrots, yams, oranges, apricots and cantaloupe.

You may want to augment your diet with a Vitamin A supplement. Nutritionists recommend 5,000 to 10,000 IU a day.

Vitamin E

If you already have vitamin E in your medicine cabinet, good for you. It just might help to reduce the symptoms of your tinnitus. Vitamin E supplies oxygen to your cells.

Foods rich in this vitamin include whole grain products, eggs, fish, green leafy vegetables, and dried beans.

And while you're changing your dietary lifestyle, pick up a fresh pineapple while you're cruising through the produce section of your grocery store.

Curing Tinnitus

The pineapple is not only delicious, but it contains this marvelous enzyme called bromelain which helps to reduce inflammation. This in turn may help reduce your symptoms of tinnitus.

Does The Word Cholin Ring A Bell?

Choline. Now there's a nutrient that you don't hear about every day. But that doesn't mean it's not vital to your health - and in this case, to the improvement of your tinnitus symptoms.

You can boost your consumption of this valued nutrient by either taking two lecithin capsules with each meal or two tablespoons of brewer's yeast every day. When some individuals with high blood pressure have followed this regimen, they've discovered their tinnitus has improved within two weeks time.

Zinc, Anyone?

That brings us to zinc. This trace mineral may be a valued partner in your attempts to eliminate the curse of tinnitus. Recent scientific research is showing that zinc sulfate can reduce, and in some cases even eliminate, tinnitus for older individuals.

Zinc supplements have actually been used to treat individuals who had both tinnitus and age-related hearing loss. The results are encouraging. Of those individuals who had low blood levels of zinc, nearly one quarter of them experienced an improvement in their symptoms with zinc.

The improvement, it must be mentioned, didn't happen overnight. It took between three to six months for the symptoms to ease.

Nutritionists caution that you shouldn't take more than 80 mg of zinc a day without medical supervision. Some foods known to have an abundance of zinc include oysters, fish, eggs, whole-grain cereals, beans and nuts.

Curing Tinnitus

Coenzyme Q10

You undoubtedly already know that Coenzyme Q10 is essential for heart health, but it may also help improve that constant noise in your ears.

Some natural health experts recommend 300 mg of Coenzyme Q10 daily. As an antioxidant, this nutrient helps build your immune system as well as improve the circulation to your ears.

Exercise That Tinnitus Away!

Okay, so it's not the type of advice you expected. Not by a long shot. However the more science delves into the benefits of exercise, the more benefits they discover - and relief from tinnitus is one of those.

Interested? You should be. It appears that physical activity is an important aspect of your body's cleansing process. And that's not all. Exercise has been known to improve your body's natural ability to balance.

So if your tinnitus is stress-related, well, here's a no brainer: exercise relieves stress! Go figure!

Exercise improves blood flow. Health experts have been telling us this for years, if not decades. So it only makes sense that exercise also helps improve the flow of blood to your ears as well.

Before you sign up for the Boston Marathon, let me explain that we're not talking about the need to train at an Olympic level. Something as simple as walking, swimming, or even yoga or tai chi, can make great strides in relieving your tinnitus symptoms.

You need to keep two vital facts in mind when you choose your exercise. The first is to select an activity that you enjoy. You're committing yourself to doing this on a regular basis, so why go through a grueling workout that doesn't suit you?

Curing Tinnitus

Secondly, just remember that you need to get active! It doesn't really matter what you do, as long as you take part in some type of activity. If you don't think you're up to jogging yet, try something a little more gentle on your body like yoga (which by the way is a great stress-reliever!).

Herbal Remedies

If you're at all familiar with herbal remedies, then you've probably already been thinking along these lines. The use of herbs to promote health is steadily growing, not only in this country, but around the world. Herbal medicine at one time was all the instruments our ancestors had to work with.

Once medicine advanced with the rise of the giant pharmaceutical companies, we seemed to have lost faith in the natural powers of herbal healing. And that's a shame. Herbs don't work by any special magic. Herbs can help heal and restore health because they are literally bursting with a variety of vitamins, minerals and a host of antioxidants and phytonutrients.

In fact, as amazing as it may sound, science is just now getting caught up with the healing power of herbs. Instead of dismissing the anecdotes of their successes as old wives tales, researchers are actually seeing various herbs perform under strict scientific studies. And you know what? For the vast majority of the time, these natural wonders pass with flying colors.

There's no reason to believe that you can't find one or two that may help relieve your tinnitus symptoms.

Bayberry Bark And More!

Walk into just about any health food store and you'll be able to find bayberry bark. You can definitely find this in both dried or supplement on the internet. If you're looking for a natural way to ease those tinnitus symptoms, you may be searching for this herb this very minute.

Curing Tinnitus

According to herbal specialists, bayberry bark may help reduce or even eliminate that annoying buzzing or ringing in your ears because of its positive and healthful effects on the blood. Bayberry bark is said to "purify the blood". In non-herbal terms, we would say that this herb helps to flush out toxins from your bloodstream.

Bayberry bark is also an excellent herbal choice if you need to control an infection.

That's not the only herb with these health powers. If bayberry bark is difficult to find or you decide it doesn't work for you, try a few other herbs that are also known for relieving infections and flushing toxins. These include:

- Burdock Root
- Goldenseal
- Hawthorn Leaf and Flower
- Myrrh Gum

If you suspect your tinnitus is caused by high blood pressure or any other circulatory problem, then you may want to seriously consider purchasing and using hawthorn. Its ability to control blood pressure, as well as normalize an otherwise unhealthy circulatory system, is legendary.

Hawthorn is so well known at helping heart-related health problems that you can find it as a supplement at just about all pharmacies, and it's usually prominently displayed at health food stores and vitamin shops.

Another Use For Ginkgo

You may already have heard that ginkgo biloba is good for your memory. But did you know that this mighty herbal supplement may also help reduce the dizziness as well as the hearing loss associated with Meniere's Disease?

Ginkgo works its "magic" for the same reason it's so good for your memory. It boosts the circulatory system. This means areas of your system which may not have been receiving enough blood for

Curing Tinnitus

ideal nourishment and optimum performance, have the opportunity to actually get the nourishment they crave.

You can purchase this herb in all health food stores and vitamin shops and in many neighborhood pharmacies as well.

Garlic

Many herbalists suggest you supplement your daily diet with garlic and kelp. Each of these helps to improve your circulatory system. Garlic, in fact, was one of the first "herbs" recognized by the conventional medical specialists to be of benefit to your circulatory system. It only goes to reason that if garlic can help lower blood pressure, it might be able to reduce your symptoms of tinnitus as well.

Miscellaneous Remedy

This particular remedy doesn't really fall in any particular category. You really can't call it an herbal remedy, and you really can't put it under improving your diet. Despite its inability to be categorized, many people swear by it.

The remedy involves mixing one teaspoon of salt and an equal amount of glycerin in one pint of warm water. Place this mixture in a nasal spray bottle. Spray into each nostril until the solution drains into the back of your throat. Then spray your throat with this mixture as well. It's recommended that you do this three times every day.

Foot Baths

It may seem ironic - even weird - that one of the best home remedies for tinnitus involves your feet. But, it really does.

Alternate taking hot and cold foot baths. Each type of bath produces different results in your body. Cold water, for example, sends your blood from the surface of your foot to other areas of your body.

Curing Tinnitus

In contrast, the hot foot bath draws your blood from the other areas into your skin and muscles. When you alternate these two therapies, the blood moves inward and outward through the dilation of blood vessels. The end result is that it increases the flow of blood to the head in particular and effectively functions as a tinnitus cure.

Homeopathic Remedies For Tinnitus

Like cures like.

That's the guiding theory behind homeopathic medicine. The phrase, used by homeopathic practitioners, indicates that the cure for an ailment often lies in its cause.

Less is more.

This is the second foundational theory of homeopathy. If you've never used this method of healing, you may not fully appreciate this statement, but once you're familiar with homeopathy, you'll come to appreciate it. In fact, the meaning becomes crystal clear and extremely sensible.

Small doses of homeopathic medication are much more effective than large doses (of anything else!). At least that's what the proponents say.

But more than that, homeopathic doctors believe that the symptoms of a disease are actually signs that your body is attempting to ward off or even cure the disease on its own.

And this implies that your body has the capacity, when left alone, to cure itself. If this is indeed the case, then the healer's role is merely to strengthen the individual's inherent ability to heal themselves.

Curing Tinnitus

Minute Amounts Are All That Are Needed

Homeopathic medication is always administered in minute dosages. Normally given in the form of liquids or tablets, these preparations derive from a wide variety of natural substances. Even more than that though, homeopathic remedies pull from a near-dizzying array of sources. Probably no other system of medication makes such free use of herbal, mineral, animal and metallic sources.

If you use homeopathic remedies for any length of time, you'll hear the phrase "minimal dose". It's exactly what it means - only administer the smallest does possible.

Of course following this law sometimes results in criticism from those ignorant of or opposed to homeopathy. Sometimes this leads to remedies that are in a form that's so diluted that none of the original healing ingredient can actually be detected.

But it's precisely this diluted form that makes homeopathic preparation available to you without the need for a prescription.

Below, I've listed some of the homeopathic remedies which may help reduce or even cure your tinnitus. Before you actually use any of them, you should consult with a homeopathic doctor. He or she can help you decide the exact remedy and the proper dose for your specific circumstances.

At the very least, the list will help get you acquainted with a variety of possible remedies. It also provides some insight into how homeopathic specialists are trained to think.

Calcarea carbonic. This remedy is usually recommended when the tinnitus symptoms are experienced alone or at times with vertigo. In addition, you may experience hearing problems, a pulsing sensation in your ears or even a cracking noise. Those who can benefit from this specific remedy usually complain of being chilly; they're easily fatigued, crave sweets and may be feeling overwhelmed and anxious.

Curing Tinnitus

Carbo vegetabilis. This particular remedy is favored when the noises in the ear are accompanied by the flu or other conditions - especially vertigo and nausea. You may be a candidate for this remedy if your symptoms worsen in the evening. If you feel cold and faint this might also be the homeopathic treatment for your tinnitus.

China or Cinchona officinalis. This medication is helpful if in addition to your tinnitus, you feel weak or nervous. Many homeopathic healers use this remedy if the person has lost fluids through vomiting, diarrhea or heavy sweating. It's also administered if blood loss has been involved through surgery.

Chininum sulphuricum. Ringing. Buzzing. Roaring. These are the sounds that indicate that this medicine may be of help. Chininum sulphuricum is also used if the sounds are loud enough to impair the person's hearing. Additional symptoms may include the chills and vertigo.

Cimicifuga. Sensitive to noise? Then you may want to try this treatment. It's often used to treat people who, in addition to the tinnitus, suffer with pain as well as muscle tension in the neck and back. The ideal candidate for this remedy is one who is usually energetic, talkative and even a little on the nervous side, but when they're not feeling well, becomes depressed or fearful.

Coffea cruda. Can't sleep at night because your mind just won't shut off? Then this remedy is for you. It's also the ideal medication if the ringing in your ears is accompanied by an extreme sensitivity to hearing. Those individuals who have a buzzing feeling in the back of their heads can also benefit from this specific remedy.

Graphites. Does your tinnitus include deafness? Then try graphites. You may also want to try it if you hear hissing and clicking sounds. Other symptoms that may indicate this remedy would be effective include constipation, poor concentration as well as cracking of your skin.

Curing Tinnitus

Kali carbonicum. If your ears itch and your tinnitus includes the sound of cracking noises, then this therapy may help you. It may be especially useful if your symptoms include vertigo.

Lycopodium. Curing humming or roaring sounds in the ears are the specialty of this remedy. You may also consider taking it if you have some degree of impairment in your hearing as well. Do you have an echo in your ears? This particular medication may be well suited to you.

Natrum salicylicum. Dull hum and hearing loss related to bone conduction require the use of this homeopathic remedy. Problems with your nerves and the presence of vertigo are also indications that this treatment may be useful.

Salicylicum acidum. Loud roaring. Loud ringing. Then you may want to check out this salicylicum acid. This is particularly so if you experience vertigo along with the loud noises. The appearance of the flu and Meniere's Disease are other indicators that this remedy may be of benefit to you. If you know that your tinnitus is caused by an excessive amount of aspirin, you'll want to try this as well.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy restores the body's natural functions and rhythms through the use of scented "essential oils". These oils, extracted from wild, or in some cases cultivated, plants, herbs, fruits and even trees, are prepared to be used most commonly as compresses, bath additives, inhalants or massaging lubricants.

Here's one example of a tinnitus aromatherapy remedy. ***The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Natural Remedies*** recommends the following essential oils when the tinnitus may be related to blood circulation problems: rosemary, cypress, lemon and rose. You can apply these by massaging the oils to the head, or through the use of a vaporizer or an aromatherapy diffuser.

Curing Tinnitus

Acupuncture, Acupressure And Ringing In Your Ears

Twenty to twenty-five years ago, acupuncture and its closely related therapy acupressure were virtually unknown in the Western world.

Today, just about everyone has at least heard of these alternative medical practices, adopted from the Chinese. And now it's difficult to find someone who hasn't used either acupuncture or acupressure.

Acupuncture is an ancient form of healing, first used in China more than 2,000 years ago. It works through the insertion of very fine needles into various areas of the body, corresponding to our basic "meridians."

Acupuncturists explain that the goal of a session is to rebalance the forces at work within your system.

In order to experience this treatment, you must visit a licensed acupuncturist. This therapy is popular enough that you may not have to travel very far in order to find a practitioner, no matter where you live.

Acupressure works under the same guidelines as acupuncture, except it involves the use of pressure points instead of the insertion of needles.

Reflexology

In some ways, you may think reflexology is closely related to acupressure. It's based on the assumption that your organs, glands and nerves are connected to what are called "reflex areas" on the bottom of your feet and the palms of your hands.

Each of these so-called reflex areas relate to specific parts of your body. By massaging the areas, you send a surge of stimulation to clear the "congestion" and help restore healthy functions.

Curing Tinnitus

The beauty of reflexology is that you can perform it on yourself without the need of special equipment or training. You only need to know which areas to massage.

Reducing the symptoms of your tinnitus through foot reflexology is actually quite simple. Just follow the steps below.

1. Sit in a comfortable chair or on a sofa or even the floor.
2. Cross one leg over the other, resting your foot on the opposite knee.
3. Find the spot directly below your last two toes - the smallest two, farthest from your big toe. This spot is said to relieve the symptoms of tinnitus.
4. Massage this for about five minutes the first day. Perform this massage for no longer than five minutes and only perform once on the first day.
5. On the second day, you want to massage this area a minimum of five minutes (you may want to increase the time period slightly) and perform this action twice a day.
6. Continue increasing the time slowly with every day you perform this. Ensure that you massage this area two times within the day. If you prefer to do hand reflexology, or both hand and foot reflexology, then follow the same routine. The only difference is that you'll massage your "little" finger and the one right next to it. Again, start the first day performing the massage for five minutes and no more. After that, slowly increase the time and perform the hand reflexology twice a day.

This chapter by no means outlines every single alternative treatment or therapy that is available to you. But it does give you a beginning. And it definitely gives you hope.

I urge you to continue your search beyond this book. Dig in and really investigate all of your options.

Conclusion

This book is just a start.

It's the start of a new pathway. If it has accomplished nothing else but to provide you with some hope, then it has fulfilled its mission.

Hopefully along the way you've not only learned how your ear works and the various causes of tinnitus, but also of some possibilities involved in actually reducing, if not eliminating, the annoying, incessant and downright disrupting noises in your ears as well.

It was never meant to be a complete look at the problem. We could fill up volumes of books with that. However it does provide you with a starting point so you can continue to learn more about how your marvelous body works.

It's my sincere hope that you found at least a glimmer of hope and a few natural secrets that can help you eliminate those sounds that you live with.

I know what's it's like to hear those noises in your head constantly. I had to wade through many false starts, broken promises and sure-fire guaranteed cures before I finally discovered just how golden and calming silence could be.

This book is an attempt to shorten the journey for you. You inevitably will try a remedy here and there that just doesn't do the trick. But armed with this knowledge, your odds are increased that your search will be much shorter than mine.

Good luck!

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