

Just What is Tinnitus?

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Do you or someone you know hear ringing, whistling, hissing, buzzing, or pulsing sounds?

If so, you may be suffering from tinnitus, a medical condition characterized by persistent ringing in one or both ears which can only be heard by the affected person. While the sounds may come and go, many sufferers experience symptoms 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with the effect ranging from slight annoyance to severe disruption of everyday life.

According to the American Tinnitus Association (www.ata.org) this fairly common ailment affects over 50 million Americans; *that's 1 out of every 6 of us!*

Before we look at the causes and treatment of this disease, let's set the record straight on its pronunciation: both "tin-NIGHT-us" and "TIN-it-us" are correct.

Causes

Tinnitus can be caused by any number of things, including:

- Noise induced hearing loss and nerve damage
- A build-up of earwax
- Some prescription and over-the-counter medications
- Ear infection or eardrum rupture
- Head and neck trauma
- Cardiovascular problems, such as hypertension

Tinnitus Treatment

Due to the unique nature of each case of Tinnitus, proper evaluation by a trained specialist is necessary. As a Doctor of Audiology, my first step in helping patients who suspect they are suffering from Tinnitus is to perform a comprehensive hearing test.

In many cases this distressing ailment can be relieved with the use of hearing aids, which can restore ambient sounds and help with the sound clarity difficulties that tinnitus sufferers often experience. Another electronic device, called a Tinnitus Masker which produces low level sounds, can be worn in the ear to diminish the ringing

sensation.

The important thing to remember about Tinnitus is that it is up to you to make the first step: seek professional help. Don't put up with this annoying and, in some cases, debilitating ailment any longer.

Call my office at (888) 844-7024 to schedule an appointment so that we can discuss your situation and needs. Ask my staff to send you an informational brochure about Tinnitus so that you can read more about this in advance of our meeting ... *because hearing is a wonderful gift!*

About the writer: Crystal Chalmers, Au.D., is an AudigyCertified™ Doctor of Audiology, the owner of North State Audiological Services in Chico, and a member of AudigyGroup, the nation's largest member-owned association of independent hearing care professionals.

Since 2006, AudigyGroup has interviewed over 5,000 of the 18,000 audiologists in the United States, yet has selected only 250 to be members in this elite association. AudigyCertified™ is a trade-mark of AudigyGroup, LLC.

To learn more about Dr. Chalmers, her practice, and AudigyGroup visit online at www.nsaudiology.com or call (888) 844-7024