

# Hearing Matters

Winter 2008



Middle TN Ear, Nose & Throat

## What's that noise in my head?

Tinnitus, pronounced tin-ni-tus or ti-night-us is the perception of sound when no external sound is present. For some people, tinnitus may not be bothersome at all or it is just a nuisance but for others, it is a life-altering condition. Approximately 50 million Americans experience tinnitus. Tinnitus is usually perceived as ringing, buzzing, roaring, crickets, or humming in the ears for which there are a variety of causes.

Causes of tinnitus are unknown however, there are several things that can trigger or make tinnitus worse. These include: noise-induced hearing loss, wax build-up in the ear canal(s), certain medications, ear infections, sinus infections, jaw misalignment, cardiovascular disease, certain types of tumors, and head and neck trauma.

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## How loud is too loud?

Sound loudness is measured in decibels (dB). It is recommended that you wear hearing protection devices if you are exposed to 85 dB or louder. So, what does that mean? Here are some common sounds and their associated sound level:

20 dB Ticking watch	95 dB MRI
30 dB Quiet whisper	100 dB Blow dryer
40 dB Refrigerator hum	105 dB Power mower, chain saw
50 dB Rainfall	110 dB Screaming child
60 dB Sewing machine	120 dB Rock concert, thunder
70 dB Washing machine	clap
80 dB Alarm clock (2 ft away)	130 dB Jackhammer, jet engine
85 dB Average traffic	plane (100 ft away)

If you work in a noisy place, play in a band, go to loud concerts, use firearms, ride motorcycles, mow the grass, use power tools, etc you need to protect your hearing. These are some of the sounds that are loud enough to damage your hearing!!! Call today for an appointment to discuss custom hearing protection.

## Things to do to help manage your tinnitus

- Avoid exposure to extreme loudness and wear hearing protection devices when exposed
- Avoid excessive stimulates such as coffee, tea, cola, and tobacco
- Implement coping techniques with relaxation and appropriate masking strategies such as maintaining low level background noise to drown out tinnitus as will a low level radio or oscillating fan
- Obtain adequate rest each night to avoid fatigue
- Decrease daily stress as much as possible; walk 20-30 minutes a day
- Reduce excessive intake of salt
- Regularly monitor blood pressure, thyroid, and sugar levels
- Before taking new medication, discuss with your doctor the possible side effects involving hearing
- Supplement of Magnesium, 400 mg per day
- Supplement of a multi-vitamin each day will provide recommended dosage of Vitamin A
- In some cases, a hearing aid or tinnitus masker may be recommended or even Tinnitus Retraining Therapy
- See your physician **immediately** if you suddenly develop a decrease in hearing, dizziness, or unilateral tinnitus (tinnitus in only one ear)
- Become actively involved in the symptoms of your tinnitus

For more information on tinnitus, please visit:

[www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)

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**Murfreesboro**  
503 E Bell St, Ste 312  
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**Call today for an  
appointment**

**Smyrna**  
300 StoneCrest Blvd, Ste 375  
615.223.9913

*Helping you hear better  
because your hearing matters.*

**Walk-In Hours**

**Thursday 1:30pm-4pm**

What is a Walk-In? A Walk-In is a time set aside for hearing aid users to come by our Murfreesboro Office for cleanings and basic hearing aid repairs such as tubing changes and battery door replacements. No appointment is needed for this first-come first-serve opportunity!

Just walk in!

**Patti's Farewell**

We are very sad to see Patti Thigpen leave our practice, but wish her the very best in her future endeavors. In leaving, Patti expressed "It has been such a joy in my life to serve at this clinic for over 12 years. The friendships that have been made are the fruits of my work. The quality of audiological care at MTENT meets the highest standards. I will be remaining in Murfreesboro and look forward to running into you and 'catching up'. Thank you for allowing me the time to be a part of your hearing health care needs and your life."