



The Southside Scene

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BOTHERED BY TINNITUS?

Tinnitus is one of the biggest symptoms that brings people into our office. The chronic humming, ringing, buzzing, crickets, or variations of sounds within the head or ears can really drive people crazy, or at least cause some worry.

Some answers to tinnitus:

- Tinnitus is most often the by-product of a measureable hearing loss. The hearing loss does not have to be so significant that it interferes with communication, or even be perceivable. The tinnitus is quite benign, and once a person knows this information, the tinnitus becomes more easily accepted.
- Tinnitus can sometimes be a result of (or complicated by) ear damage, ear pathology or disease processes, or trauma to the ear. At times, these issues can be medically treatable, and therefore the tinnitus is successfully treated. Even simple wax has been known to be the cause of tinnitus. Noise trauma can also cause tinnitus.
- Tinnitus can be a result of (or complicated by) muscular tensions, orthopedic issues, dental issues or trauma, or head trauma/injury. A person can experience tinnitus as a result of TMJ, teeth clenching/grinding, orthodontics, arthritis in the neck, jaw or shoulder, bone spurs in the neck, surgery of the neck or shoulder, history of concussion or stroke.
- Tinnitus can be a result of (or complicated by) medications. There are a variety of medications that will list tinnitus as a possible side effect. I would highly suspect that combinations of medications can be a source of tinnitus, even if an individual medication does not have tinnitus listed as a side effect. Common over-the-counter medications that can cause tinnitus include aspirin. Typically the dosage needs to be quite high for it to be toxic to the ear. Therefore, the low dose aspirin often suggested for heart issues is not often an issue

Again, discovering the cause of the tinnitus is frequently enough to ease the mind of the person experiencing the tinnitus. When the cause of the tinnitus is not discovered, or when the tinnitus is caused by multiple issues, is when the tinnitus becomes debilitating. It can cause sleep deprivation

and increase anxiety. Chipping away at the multiple causes or aggravators can often reduce that tinnitus to a more manageable level and acceptance. Such methods can include bite guards, massage therapies, muscle relaxants, and dental treatments.

There are numerous advertisements indicating that there are successful medical treatments or cures for tinnitus. Be skeptical of any of these advertisements. The truth is, if there were a known medical treatment that was unequivocally successful, there would not be so many companies out there trying to advertise their treatment. The only successful cure comes when the cause of the tinnitus is known and is reversible. The advertisements you see out there bank on the placebo effect. Placebo effect is when the person believes the treatment works, so it does. There is a place in medicine for placebo effect, but it cannot be called a cure!

Since there is no cure for most tinnitus, the next best thing is the management of the tinnitus. Management can range from hypnotherapy, prescribed medications attending to the anxiety it is causing, relaxation techniques including biofeedback, and combined therapies. Because the most common cause of the tinnitus is a known hearing loss, the most effective approach for managing tinnitus is through managing the hearing loss. Yes, this does mean hearing aids, even if the loss is mild or unperceivable. Many find that once the hearing loss is successfully managed, the tinnitus is greatly reduced; and many times not at all noticeable when the hearing aids are being worn.

However, when wearing "just" a hearing aid does not quite do the trick, there are other tricks that current technology can do for tinnitus. Within the past year, many manufacturers have been able to introduce tinnitus treatment solutions within the hearing aids themselves. Typically it only requires using an extra circuit or program to introduce an external sound or noise that is more preferable to the user than their tinnitus itself. Because it is an external sound versus the internal tinnitus sound, the brain attends to it differently. Therefore the brain will bring that external sound to the forefront of attention, putting the tinnitus out of focus. ■

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QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

"Anything worth doing is
going to be difficult."

- Fauja Singh, *Runner's
World*



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PATIENT APPRECIATION EVENTS—SAVE THE DATE!

We love to celebrate around the office, so we decided who better to celebrate than our patients! The focus of the celebration will be your birthday. Who doesn't love celebrating their birthday? [If your birthday falls within the months of January to April, then you are invited to your birthday party!](#) Come to either office for your celebration:

- **Thursday, March 10th in Henrietta from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., OR**
- **Monday March 21st in Geneseo from 3:30 to 4:30. p.m.**

Bring a friend or loved one. Cake will be served! Birthday not within those months? Stay tuned for the date of your upcoming party! ■

STAFF & FAMILY UPDATES

Kathy's daughter, Shannon, is ramping up for the SAT and ACT. She is busy with dance, taking 3 Advanced Placement courses as a junior in high school, and also taking 2 courses at RIT this semester. She'll be heading to Austria and Hungary in June with the R-H Singers as a reward for all the hard work she's doing!

Tammy stays very busy with her youngest daughter, Tyra. She will be 16 in a couple of months, and is extremely excited to get her driver's permit. In the meantime, it's been a busy winter with Junior Varsity basketball, which is about to come to an end and then we will start with softball. Tammy's oldest daughter, Holly, recently turned 24 and is finding out that it really isn't very fun to be an adult. Family time is always a fun adventure.

Dr. Orlando is happy to have one son graduated from college and on his way! Ryan graduated in December from Pitt and has just started his first job as an industrial engineer in Madison, WI. Although he found it difficult to leave Pittsburgh, he looks forward to new experiences in Madison. While one son has moved farther away, the other has transferred closer to home. Evan just transferred to Geneseo to complete the second semester of his sophomore year in college. Exciting years for all of us!



Dr. DeBruyne's family is just plain busy. Between gymnastics (*pictured, left*), soccer, and dance, we are constantly going. The activity certainly keeps the kids healthy. Keeping things balanced is always a challenge, but we make room for good old family fun too. We just recently spent a wonderful day in Niagara Falls enjoying the beautiful weather we have been having (*pictured, right*). ■

