

## Tinnitus – Sounds of Silence

Tinnitus is perception of sound in the ear that is not result of an external sound. Tinnitus can be high pitched or low pitched, Tonal or noise like, and constant, pulsed or intermittent. Onset of Tinnitus can be sudden or it may develop gradually. Tinnitus can be perceived in one ear, both ears, or in the head.

### **What Causes Tinnitus?**

To find exact underlying cause of Tinnitus is a difficult task. Sometimes underlying cause of Tinnitus is unknown. Some of the potential causes are –

Ear wax, Foreign body touching the ear drum, middle ear infections, ear muscle spasms, vascular abnormalities, otosclerosis, eustachian tube dysfunction, benign tumors of middle ear, damage of inner ear due to noise exposure, age related hearing loss (presbycusis), inner ear infection (labyrinthitis), meniere's disease, ototoxicity, over dose of certain medications, acoustic tumors, high or low blood pressure, diabetes, thyroid dysfunction, anemia, trauma of head & neck, temporomandibular dysfunction.

### **What to do when you have Tinnitus?**

Consult a certified Audiologist to get your Hearing and Tinnitus evaluated. And discuss your management options available based on assessment. Also consult a physician preferably ENT specialist to determine if your Tinnitus condition requires medical or surgical treatment.

Educate yourself about the nature of Tinnitus and methods for managing and relieving your associated problems like anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation etc.

### **What treatment options are available for Tinnitus?**

A variety of Tinnitus management procedures are available. None are universal cures, but most Tinnitus sufferers can find varying degrees of relief from one or a combination of following procedures –

- Counselling
- Hearing Aids
- Masking
- Medications
- Stress Management
- Tinnitus Habituation (Retraining)