

- Try to read, watch television or surf the internet earlier in the evening. Try to wind down at least an hour before bed - have a warm bath, a milky drink or listen to relaxing music. This helps to draw a line between daytime and bedtime and will help you to get ready for sleep.
- Go to bed when you feel sleepy – not just because it's a certain time. Trying to force sleep may be counter-productive, but simply resting in bed may be beneficial.
- Think about room temperature and the bedding you use - if you're too hot or too cold in your bed, you're more likely to wake up during the night. If your mattress is old or uncomfortable, this may also cause you to wake up more easily. Typically, mattresses should be replaced at least every 10 years.



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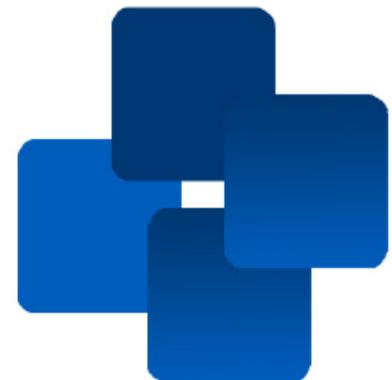
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Patient Information

SLEEP



Audiology Department



How does tinnitus affect sleep?

Tinnitus can affect sleep, although not always. About half of the people who are troubled by their tinnitus, sleep poorly.

Some people with tinnitus may find they have greater difficulty getting off to sleep. It may be that the shift from a relatively noisy daytime environment to the quietness of the bedroom makes the tinnitus noises more noticeable.

When asleep, it's extremely unlikely that tinnitus will actually wake you up, but it could be the first thing you are aware of when you wake up naturally. This can create the impression that it was your tinnitus that woke you.



Sleep patterns do change with age – you may have noticed this. Generally, as you grow older:

- You need less sleep at night time.
- You wake up more frequently during the night.
- Your sleep becomes lighter and more fragmented so you may nap during the day.

Most people get about seven to eight hours of sleep a night, but this can vary. If you are concerned about your general sleeping pattern, you should discuss it with your GP.

Top tips for a good night's sleep

Try to keep to regular hours. Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day will programme your body to sleep better:

- **Choose a time to go to bed** when you're most likely to feel sleepy.
- **Get up at the same time each day** - even at weekends. This is one of the most important things you can do to improve your sleep. Try not to nap in the day or catch up on lost sleep, this won't improve your sleeping pattern.
- **Try regular exercise** - People who exercise tend to sleep better, but avoid exercising too close to bedtime.
- **Reduce your intake of caffeine and nicotine** - both are stimulants that can keep you awake.

- **Avoid drinking too much alcohol** - it may help you get to sleep initially, but it may also cause you to wake sooner and stop you getting back to sleep.
- **Over the counter medicines** - these may have a similar effect to alcohol. You may find herbal remedies and natural healthcare products help.
- **Don't eat just before bed or during the night** - this will boost your energy levels and may make you more alert, which can increase your tinnitus perception. However, do make sure that you've eaten enough earlier in the evening, as hunger can keep you awake.
- **Try relaxation exercises** - these can be extremely helpful. Practise during the day and find a short exercise to try when you are in bed.
- **Clear your mind before bedtime** - If you have particular worries, set aside an amount of time earlier in the evening (say half an hour) to think about how to resolve your problems. Write your ideas down. Try not to think about them as you are trying to get to sleep.
- **Introduce gentle sound into your environment** - this can help you to relax and distract you from your tinnitus. You could use an electric fan, soft music or a clock with a prominent tick. Or you could try a sound generator specifically developed for people with tinnitus.