



TINNITUS PATIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your appointment time to fill out any outstanding paperwork.
If you arrive more than 15 minutes past your appointment time, you may be asked to reschedule.
If you need to cancel your appointment, please give at least 24 hours' notice, or you may be charged a no-show fee.

What is tinnitus?

Tinnitus is the perception of sound (ringing, buzzing, roaring, crickets) when there is no actual external noise present. It can be perceived in many different ways. In some rare cases, a tinnitus patient may report hearing music. It can be both acute (temporary) or chronic (ongoing).

Tinnitus is one of the most common health conditions in the country. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reports that almost 15% of the general population, over 50 million Americans, experience some form of tinnitus. Of that 50 million, 20 million people have burdensome chronic tinnitus, and 2 million have extreme and debilitating cases.

Tinnitus is not a disease itself but rather a symptom of some other underlying health condition. In the vast majority of cases, tinnitus is not a symptom of anything serious.

Audiologists and otolaryngologists are equipped to manage tinnitus, but many choose not to due to the complexity and relatively limited research regarding tinnitus treatment. It is true that there is no real cure for tinnitus, but that doesn't mean that it can't be properly managed!

Enclosed in this packet are Tinnitus Questionnaires and a Tinnitus Patient Agreement. Please fill these out and bring them to your scheduled appointment.

What to expect at your appointment:

The Carolina ENT Tinnitus Clinic provides counseling and sound therapy for patients with bothersome tinnitus.

The purpose of this appointment is to educate you on the current theories of tinnitus, as well as treatment and management procedures, including potential advantages and limitations.

Counseling includes the discussion of the specific problems caused by tinnitus, as well as its neural mechanisms and the sources that create tinnitus and allow it to continue.

Many patients with tinnitus also experience hearing loss, and in those cases, hearing aids may be recommended as a treatment approach.

Some patients find that their tinnitus influences depression and anxiety, and in those cases, counseling can include coping strategies along with referrals to psychology for cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

Initial appointments are scheduled for two hours to allow the patient enough time to convey in full the influences and effects of tinnitus. Many people believe there is no cure for tinnitus; however, our clinical activity targets a patient's ability to manage the tinnitus effects.

The objective of our approach is for the patient to be able to coexist with tinnitus in a way that minimizes its impact on a person's life.

Payment for Tinnitus Management:

Insurance does not cover the cost of tinnitus management and counseling. The cost for this service is \$100 for the initial visit. Any subsequent follow-up appointments are \$75. Test procedures associated with tinnitus management appointments, such as tinnitus matching, may be covered by your insurance. These fees do not cover the cost of hearing aids or sound-generating devices.

The insurance CPT codes that may be required for your first visit include:

92625 Tinnitus Evaluation (Tinnitus Pitch and Loudness Matching)

- This test matches the loudness and pitch of the tinnitus to externally generated stimuli.

92587 Otoacoustic Emissions Screening

- These tests assess cochlear outer hair cell function to assist in identifying the location of auditory pathology.

Payment is due in full at the time of services, and price is subject to change.

Hearing aids and hearing aid exams are not covered by Medicare and are generally not covered by insurance. If you have a hearing aid insurance benefit, we will verify it before your initial appointment.

About the Audiologist:

Emilee Tucker, Au.D., CCC-A, is a native of Gastonia, North Carolina. Dr. Tucker earned her doctorate in audiology from East Tennessee State University and her bachelor's in communication disorders with a minor in psychology from Appalachian State University.

While attending ETSU, she studied tinnitus management under the guidance of Dr. Marc Fagelson, Ph.D., a world-renowned audiologist and professor who has directed a dedicated tinnitus management clinic for over 15 years. He has also authored multiple textbooks in the area of tinnitus and currently serves on the scientific advisory committee for the American Tinnitus Association.

Dr. Tucker enjoys helping patients manage their tinnitus through amplification or other methods. A hearing aid wearer herself for over 20 years, she also enjoys treating hearing loss through amplification and accessories.

Dr. Tucker is a provider member of the American Tinnitus Association and has also earned her certificate of clinical competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.