

## Audiology

# How to use a white noise generator (WNG) app for hyperacusis

Hyperacusis is when the sounds of everyday life seem much louder than they should. This can happen when the hearing pathways in the brain, known as the auditory system, become more sensitive. Research has shown that this can be influenced by anxiety, stress, or depression.

White noise is a random flat noise and sounds like a radio when out of tune. You have chosen to use a white noise app on your smartphone or tablet to access white noise. This is used as a form of sound therapy to reduce the sensitivity in the auditory system.

Start by listening to a very low level of sound. Slowly increase the length of time that you listen to the sound during each day. Do this until you are comfortable listening to the sound at that level.

Then, slightly increase the volume. The new sound level should not cause any problems, though you may need time to adjust to it.

Again, when you can easily tolerate the new sound level, you should increase the volume. This gradual increase in volume will improve your ability to tolerate different sounds in everyday life.

There is no set volume that you must reach, but the volume should always be at a level where you are also able to hear conversation clearly. Over time, you will be able to tolerate everyday sounds again. You can then reduce your reliance on the white noise app.



## Patient Information

### How long will it take?

Some people find that sound therapy gives them initial relief quite quickly. It can typically take 12 to 18 months for most people to find a long-term improvement without the need to use the app.

### Important note:

If you have hyperacusis, it is important that you do not use ear plugs to try and block out sound. This may seem like a logical thing to do. However, the auditory system has less access to sound if you wear earplugs, so it searches for sound. This can increase your sensitivity to sounds.

### Using the WNG app

You can use the app with your smartphone or tablet and your Bluetooth/wireless speaker headset.

The app should be used whenever possible during the day.

### Sounds to use

Most of the apps provide access to different sounds, from white noise to nature sounds. Ideally, you should choose the white noise sound, but you may choose any sound that you find pleasant to listen to.

### Further information

Further information on hyperacusis can be found at The British Tinnitus Association: [www.tinnitus.org.uk](http://www.tinnitus.org.uk)

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 024 7696 6444 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

#### Document History

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