

Centre for Hearing and Balance

Tinnitus - Using a Sound Generator for Tinnitus



Introduction

You have been given a Sound Generator as you have tinnitus in one ear, both ears or in your head. The Sound Generator is to be used to help with sleep as well as quiet situations when needed. The Sound Generator plays a variety of ambient sounds. White noise is a random flat noise and sounds like a radio when out of tune. It can be used to alleviate the symptoms of tinnitus.

Using the Sound Generator

The Sound Generator should ideally be used for sleep as well as quiet periods of the day. The ambient noise should be played below the level of your tinnitus. It is important that the Sound Generator is not used to mask or



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block out your tinnitus as this will not help you to habituate to the tinnitus. Having the Sound Generator at below the level of your tinnitus, allows the brain to be distracted from the tinnitus, by hearing the rushing and the tinnitus together. Part of the problem of tinnitus is the attention the brain pays to sounds within the head. A Sound Generator can help the brain to tune the sound out.

It may take several months before you begin to gain benefit from your Sound Generator so don't be disappointed if it doesn't help you immediately. The sound of the ambient noise is more soothing and pleasant to listen to than the tinnitus. The tinnitus can have an emotional label attached to it, you hate it, or you wish it would go away, find it frustrating etc. Ambient noise is a constant sound which doesn't vary in pitch or intensity and does not have the same label and therefore is a more soothing noise. Using the Sound Generator provides a sound without meaning or significance.

Controls on your Sound Generator:

- Your Sound Generator takes 4x AA batteries and the battery compartment is located at the bottom of the Sound Generator. However if you will be using the Sound Generator on a regular basis, you may run through a lot of batteries, in this case an A/C adaptor can be bought from most good electronic shops to plug into a 230 Volt electric outlet.
- To turn the power on, slide the button located on the side on the Sound Generator to ON from OFF. There is also an option of a TIMER but we would recommend that you do not use this.
- The volume control is located in front of the Sound Generator. In order to adjust the volume, the dial should either be turned clockwise to increase the volume and anti- clockwise to decrease the volume. It is important to have the volume turned down to just an audible level as this will help to habituate to the tinnitus.
- To select sound, press the button located along the bottom of the Sound Generator to the corresponding desired sound.

Patient Information

If you need any further information please contact the Centre for Hearing and Balance Disorders on 024 7696 6444.

Further information on tinnitus can be found at <https://rnid.org.uk/> or 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

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