

Broadcast Script

Wait until you hear about tinnitus

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month

INTRO

Do you ever get a loud ringing in your ears? What about a hissing or whooshing or clicking sound? Chances could be that you have tinnitus.

And you're not alone. Many people have a ringing or another sound in their ears from time to time. But tinnitus (tin-NITE-us or TIN-ne-tus) can be both persistent and frustrating for people with a severe case of it.

VO

Tinnitus is a symptom, not a disease. It's been linked to noise exposure, hearing loss, a side effect from taking certain medications at high doses and the aging process. (Hearing loss impacts one in three people over the age of 65.) An injury to the head or neck can damage the structures of the ear, and even ear wax or an ear infection can cause a blockage of the ear and trigger tinnitus.

According to Dr. Chris Workman, an audiologist with OSF HealthCare, tinnitus can occur in one or both ears.

((SOT))

Dr. Chris Workman, Audiologist, OSF HealthCare

“Most of the time, we see it happen in both ears because it's gradual due to aging, noise exposure or some other health issues. Sometimes hypertension, cardiovascular health can play a role. So it may come on slowly and gradually and usually both ears. If it's one ear, I would definitely suggest having it checked out.” (:22)

VO TAG

There is no cure for tinnitus. But there are therapies and devices called sound generators which may help silence tinnitus, mask the sounds or help the patient get used to the noise or distract them.

Dr. Workman also suggests limiting the intake of caffeine, alcohol and cigarettes, which can increase tinnitus. Lifestyle issues such as exercise and diet are also important to cardiovascular health which also helps overall health, including hearing.

For starters, people age 55 and over should schedule a hearing test to establish a baseline.