
Adult audiology department

Sound generators

Information for patients, relatives and carers

How to get the most out of sound generators (also known as white noise generators)

Who are sound generators for?

Sound generators are best used for patients who have normal or very near-normal hearing and whose tinnitus troubles them during the day in quiet environments (they are not worn when sleeping), or those who have hyperacusis (heightened sensitivity to loud sounds).

How can they help?

Sound generators aim to help the brain focus less on tinnitus by providing a low-level blanket of sound as a distraction and for relaxation. It is easier for the brain to recognise a sound such as white noise as a meaningless and uninteresting sound which makes the brain lose interest in it. The volume of the sound generator should not be set at a level that totally masks the tinnitus as this is unlikely to help in the long-term, however the goal is that the generated sound and tinnitus become mixed over time with both sounds eventually becoming uninteresting for the brain.

For hyperacusis, sound generators help to calm heightened hearing by helping the brain to lower its strained super-hearing that is associated with stress.

The generated sound should be heard in quiet places but may not be heard in noisy places such as a busy road.

How and when should they be worn?

It is recommended that sound generators are worn every day for a single block of 6-8 hours, but many people start with four hours and then gradually increase the time they wear them.

Sound generators are not worn forever. Typically, they are worn for 6-18 months, giving time for the tinnitus perception/sound sensitivity to reduce. Also, they are not a quick fix so you may not notice an immediate improvement. This is completely normal as it is a process that needs to take time.

Contact details

Charing Cross Hospital	St Mary's Hospital	St Mary Abbots Hearing Aid Centre
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How do I make a comments or suggestions?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross Hospital) or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's Hospital). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

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