

Ringing in the Ears

Category: 2 Symptom

What is it?

Ringing in the ear, or tinnitus (pronounced ti-NIGHT-us), can be a troublesome symptom associated with Long COVID. People usually describe it as a whistling, ringing, or white noise sound. The sound can repeat constantly or change, and it can become worse later in the day.

Tinnitus can happen because of abnormal nerve signals from the cochlea, which is a structure in the inner ear.



What can you do to manage it?

For many people, tinnitus comes and goes following post-exertional malaise. If your tinnitus bothers you more when your other symptoms are flaring up or later in the day when you are already tired, then try General Recovery tips elsewhere on *MyGuide*. These tips might not work right away but may help with your tinnitus over time.

Here are things you can do to help you right away with tinnitus:

- Playing background white noise, nature sounds (like rain or water), or calming music through headphones. Play around with the pitch of the white noise to see what works best for you (click [here](#) for a free app for creating background noise).
- If you find yourself getting stressed or frustrated by the tinnitus, try a mindfulness approach: Name qualities of the sound you hear, separate from the annoying or painful qualities. Take a moment to sit back and describe the pitch, quality, tone, and any waves in the sound while breathing deeply and reminding yourself that it's normal to feel stressed and frustrated by ongoing symptoms of Long COVID. (This method is also called somatic tracking.)

When should you see a doctor about tinnitus?

Sometimes, ongoing tinnitus can be a sign of more serious conditions that would need further medical attention. If you have any of the following signs and symptoms along with your tinnitus, you should see your family doctor:

1. Vertigo – dizziness with spinning sensation and nausea
2. Any pain in the ear or liquid coming out from the ear
3. New hearing loss
4. Loss of balance or more than one fall

**Adapted from [Tinnitus \(Ringing in the Ears\)](#) from MyGuide Concussion*