Northeastern University Speech Language and Hearing Center
Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Program

What is Tinnitus?

Tinnitus is the perception of sound in your ears or head when no external sound source is present. This can sound like ringing, buzzing, roaring, hissing, whooshing, and more. Many people experience occasional tinnitus, but some people experience it more regularly. For people who have constant tinnitus, it can be annoying and can interfere with daily activities such as work, concentration and sleep. In addition, some people can develop a sensitivity to sound, where sounds that are typically not bothersome to most people become intolerable. This is called hyperacusis.

Northeastern’s Speech-Language and Hearing Center offers the following services/products to our patients:

1) Consultation: This initial appointment provides an explanation of the auditory system and the current understanding of tinnitus, as well as information about methods to help manage the tinnitus. Follow-up sessions and therapies will also be discussed.

2) Evaluation: This involves audiologic evaluation of your hearing and your tinnitus. The audiologist and patient will work together to develop a program that is individualized to the needs of the patient.

3) Tinnitus Habituation Therapy: This involves a number of counseling sessions as well as the use of sound therapy. The goal of this is to retraining the brain to minimize the importance of the tinnitus. This can take from 6 to 12 months.

4) Sound Therapy: This involves the use of sound generators, which include room noise generators as well as custom fit devices.

5) Hearing Aids: For patients with hearing loss and tinnitus, the ability to better hear everyday sounds and speech through hearing aids can help reduce the impact of the tinnitus.

To be evaluated at the Northeastern SLHC:

Call (617) 373-2492 to inquire about an appointment. An intake form and questionnaires will be sent to your home for you to bring to your first appointment, in order to obtain more information about how you perceive your tinnitus.