

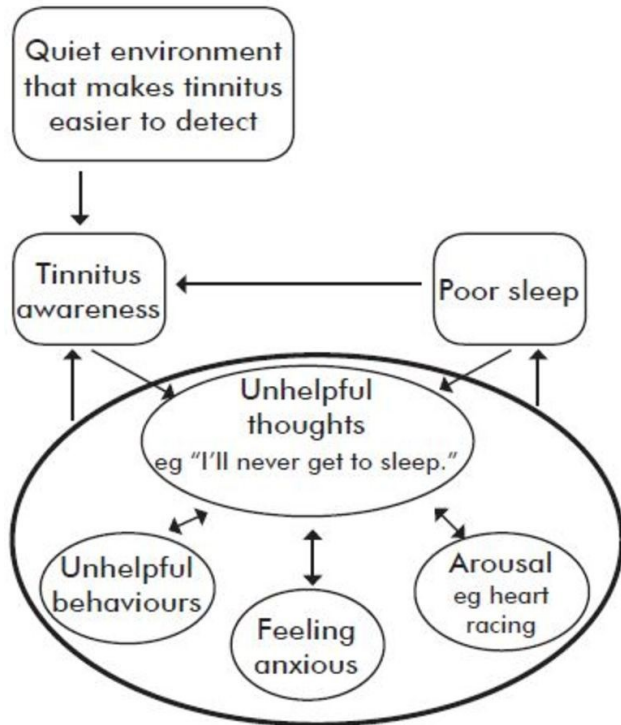
TINNITUS TIMES

UNCG
SPEECH
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CENTER

Dreams of Sleep

This issue of *Tinnitus Times*, a newsletter on all matters pertaining to tinnitus and sound sensitivity, focuses on the critical **role of sleep** in a patient’s plan of care. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports one in ten Americans experience chronic insomnia, which can negatively impact general health. “Insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions—such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression” (www.cdc.gov/sleep). Anecdotal reports of sleep disturbance among individuals with tinnitus are supported by research. For those who have difficulty sleeping, tinnitus can seem to be the reason. It can be easy to focus on tinnitus upon awakening as it moves from subconscious to conscious perception. Tinnitus also may seem louder in a quiet sleeping environment. Moreover, anticipation that tinnitus is going to prevent sleep can serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy (“I expect to be disturbed, therefore I am”). The perception that tinnitus is to blame for sleep difficulties can intensify the negative emotions it evokes and reinforce the disturbance that it causes. This can lead to feelings of anxiety and trigger the body’s

“fight or flight” response causing physical discomfort. As shown in the diagram, the combination of environmental factors, attitudes, behaviors, and physiological arousal can influence both sleep and tinnitus disturbance.



To effectively manage tinnitus disturbance, an important first step is to explore potential barriers to falling and/or staying asleep. Learning to implement **healthy sleep habits** (see reverse) can minimize the role of tinnitus in sleep disturbance. A variety of **sound therapy options** also are available to facilitate sleep including table-top maskers, ear-level sound generators, and sound pillows. UNCG currently is conducting a research study comparing use of two sound pillows for tinnitus relief (see reverse). In addition, use of **HeartMath® coherent breathing techniques** can promote feelings of calm and relaxation. For more information about tools that may facilitate sleep, contact the **UNCG Speech and Hearing Center** at **(336) 334-5939** to schedule an appointment for a professional consultation.

The Role of Tinnitus in the Vicious Cycle of Insomnia (Source: British Tinnitus Association, <http://tinnitus.org.uk/sleep>).

12 Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

- Go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day.
- Limit napping during the day.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol late in the day.
- Avoid heavy/spicy foods and limit fluids before bedtime.
- Keep active during the day and exercise regularly.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine and comfortable sleeping environment.
- Avoid exposure to blue light from electronics at least one hour before bed.
- Regulate your body temperature.
- Write down worries that you may have.
- Get out of bed if you are not sleeping after 15-30 minutes.
- Practice relaxation exercises such as deep, even breathing.
- Use soothing sounds to enrich the acoustic environment.



Effectiveness of the iLs of Dreampad™ versus the Sound Pillow® on Reducing Tinnitus and Sleep Disturbance

Participants needed for a study investigating the use of sound pillows to reduce tinnitus disturbance and improve sleep. Participants must be 18 years of age or older and have trouble falling asleep and/or staying asleep due to their tinnitus disturbance. Participants will be loaned two different sound pillows for a period of two weeks and will be asked to complete a survey evaluating each pillow. Participation in the study would require up to a three week time commitment. Upon completion of the study, participants will be entered in a drawing to win the sound pillow of their choice (up to \$249 value). Contact Jeff Mills at UNCG Speech and Hearing Center at (336) 256-2001 for more information.

We need your help! If you have been satisfied with your services at **UNCG Speech and Hearing Center**, please consider reviewing us online. You can post your reviews for free on www.google.com or www.yelp.com. You also can post a review on one of our two Facebook pages: www.facebook.com/uncgaudiology or www.facebook.com/uncgspeechandhearingcenter. Look for the box labeled "Reviews" on the left-hand side of the page. We believe the greatest compliment is the personal referral of family and friends.