PSYCHOACOUSTIC TESTS OF TINNITUS

CHRIS DEPLACIDO
SPONSORED BY GN OTOMETRICS.
The purpose of this talk is not to debate whether or not to use these tests.

Further reading is suggested to give you some background on the latest research.
WHEN DO WE DO THE TESTS

• Or more importantly when should we not!
The tests can be done at any time throughout the patient journey but there are some things to remember –
Doing the tests can be tiring and can make the person focus on their tinnitus.
On the first visit the person may be emotional.
There are times when the individual is feeling particularly bad and a poor result on these tests may be counter-productive
- Use clinical judgement
SO HOW DO WE DO THE TESTS?

- Pitch masking
- Pitch masking
- Residual inhibition??
PITCH MATCHING/MASKING

• Ask the patient to decide in which ear the tinnitus is more troublesome, if there is more than one noise, ask them to focus on the most annoying one.
• Present the tones to the other ear at a level that is suitable for any hearing loss that is present.
• Use a paired bracketing technique to find the frequency closest in pitch to the tinnitus.
• Present that tone in ascending steps (1 dB HL) if possible until the loudness matches the tinnitus.
TINNITUS MASKING

• Change from Pure tone to narrow band noise and use the ear where the Tinnitus is worse as the test ear.
• Present the masking noise in small increasing increments until the patient indicates that they can no longer hear their tinnitus.
RESIDUAL INHIBITION

- Add 10dB HL to the masking level
- Instruct the patient carefully
- Record the length of time of partial or full inhibition
- Record any changes to the tinnitus
HOW CAN WE USE THEM IN PRACTICE?

• As a way of showing progress to individuals and their significant others.

• To assist with counselling e.g. Challenging irrational thoughts in CBT.
USING QUESTIONNAIRES

- Tinnitus reaction questionnaire (TRQ)
- Tinnitus handicap inventory (THI)
- Tinnitus Functional index (TFI)
FURTHER READING


- Tyler RS; Noble W; Coelho CB; Ji H; (2012) Tinnitus retraining therapy: mixing point and total masking are equally effective. Ear & Hearing, Sep-Oct; 33 (5): 588-94
ANY QUESTIONS