



**BeyondDuty+**

## What is Tinnitus – Advice from Medical Experts

Tinnitus is commonly described as a **perception of sound without any external source**. For many veterans, this experience manifests as **ringing, buzzing, or humming in the ears**. The British Tinnitus Association estimates that approximately **1 in 7 adults in the UK experience tinnitus symptoms**, underscoring the widespread nature of this condition.

“Tinnitus is not a disease itself but a symptom of an underlying condition, often related to hearing loss or neural changes in the auditory system.” – ENT Expert, Rich Williams

### Key Causes of Tinnitus

Cause	Description
Noise-Induced Hearing Loss	Damage to hair cells in the inner ear from loud sounds – a common causation in veterans
Ear and Sinus Infections	Inflammation that affects auditory pathways
Ototoxic Medications	Certain drugs that damage the inner ear
Age-Related Hearing Loss (Presbycusis)	Gradual decline in auditory function with age
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	Disruption to neural circuits involved in hearing



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## Diagnosis & Monitoring Tinnitus in Veterans

Diagnosing tinnitus is often more complex than identifying hearing loss alone. Since tinnitus is a subjective experience, clinicians rely heavily on veterans' descriptions of their symptoms. ENT specialists and audiologists use a combination of clinical interviews, hearing tests, and validated questionnaires to capture the impact of tinnitus on daily life. A thorough evaluation not only measures hearing thresholds but also assesses how tinnitus affects concentration, sleep, and emotional well-being.

## Standard Tools Used in Tinnitus Assessment

Assessment Tool	Purpose
Pure Tone Audiometry	Measures hearing sensitivity across frequencies
Tinnitus Handicap Inventory	Evaluates perceived severity and impact
Otoacoustic Emissions	Assesses cochlear hair cell function
Tympanometry	Checks the middle ear health
Psychoacoustic Matching	Estimates pitch and loudness of tinnitus

## The Importance of Early Monitoring

For veterans, early diagnosis is critical. Not only does it validate their experience, but it also creates a baseline to monitor changes. This is especially important because tinnitus can worsen over time or fluctuate depending on stress levels, PTSD symptoms, and exposure to further noise.

## How We Can Assist

Our specialists at Veteran Welfare Group can guide you through the process of getting help, from arranging expert appointments to providing resources about hearing protection and treatment options.

You deserve support that respects your service and your health needs. Whether you're newly discharged or have lived with tinnitus, help is available.

## Contact Us

For more information and support, get in touch with our advisors and veterans with lived experience today.



[enquiries@veteranswelfaregroup.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@veteranswelfaregroup.co.uk)



0330 056 0174

