Audiology Clinical Faculty

Audiologists at the UNCG Speech and Hearing Center have treated hundreds of patients with severe tinnitus symptoms and hyperacusis. Tinnitus patients are referred to UNCG from across the state of North Carolina and surrounding area. In addition to evaluation and treatment of tinnitus, faculty at the UNCG Speech and Hearing Center also currently are engaged in research on tinnitus.

♦ Denise A. Tucker, Ph.D., CCC-A, Associate Professor in Audiology and Audiology Clinic Supervisor. Dr. Tucker received training in tinnitus retraining therapy (TRT) at Emory University in 1999. She also has received advanced training in tinnitus management by attending international tinnitus seminars and consulting with researchers and clinicians at leading tinnitus clinics. Dr. Tucker has lectured on tinnitus management to professionals across the United States.

♦ Lisa Fox-Thomas, Ph.D, CCC-A, Assistant Professor in Audiology, Coordinator of Audiology Services, and Audiology Clinic Supervisor. Dr. Fox-Thomas has worked at UNCG Speech and Hearing Center since 2003. She received training in TRT at Towson University and training in Neuromonics in 2007. Dr. Fox-Thomas has lectured on tinnitus management at UNCG and to professionals and patients in the surrounding community.

UNCG Speech and Hearing Center

The UNCG Speech and Hearing Center is located on the third floor of the Ferguson Building on the UNCG campus (located at the corner of Spring Garden Street and Highland Avenue). Free parking in an adjacent lot is provided.

Contact Us

If you would like more information regarding treatments offered at UNCG Speech and Hearing Center or would like to make an appointment, contact us at:

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Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Clinic
300 Ferguson Building
P.O. Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
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It is estimated that as many as 50 million Americans experience *tinnitus*, typically described as “ringing in the ears.” Tinnitus is an auditory phenomenon that can vary among individuals. It can be perceived in one or both ears and sometimes in the head. Tinnitus has varied descriptions including ringing, buzzing, roaring, or pulsing. For some individuals, tinnitus can be chronic and severe, causing significant distress and negatively impacting daily life. Although tinnitus can occur along with hearing loss, it also can be symptomatic of other medical issues or can present for no apparent reason.

**What is hyperacusis?**

Many individuals (with and without tinnitus) experience sound sensitivity, a condition known as *hyperacusis*. These individuals report reduced tolerance for sounds that are not bothersome to others. Often, individuals with hyperacusis avoid noisy and/or unpredictable listening environments, which can complicate daily activities and lead to social isolation. Notably, excessive usage of earplugs as a coping strategy is common and can worsen symptoms.

**What is Neuromonics?**

The Neuromonics Tinnitus Treatment includes an FDA cleared medical device that uses customized music for the treatment of tinnitus. Clinical trials have shown Neuromonics to be effective for reducing tinnitus disturbance in the majority of candidates who are suitable for the treatment. Patients at UNCG have had similar results, with 92% demonstrating clinical success (tinnitus disturbance reduced by an average of 75% at completion).

**What is TRT?**

Although there currently is no “cure” for tinnitus, treatments are available to help individuals get relief and control over severe tinnitus symptoms. Tinnitus Retraining Therapy (TRT) is a treatment protocol that combines testing, directive counseling, and sound therapy to help individuals better manage their tinnitus. The neurophysiological model of tinnitus, developed by Dr. Pawel Jasterboff, is explored during directive counseling to demystify tinnitus and reduce anxiety associated with its perception. Habitation of an individual’s stress reaction to tinnitus is accomplished with the aid of sound therapy, which also serves to treat hyperacusis.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**

**What is tinnitus?**

**How much does treatment cost?**

To determine an individual’s candidacy for treatment, a complete audiological assessment and consultation are required, which are billed at the initial appointment. Treatment costs vary depending on the approach to treatment determined to be most appropriate for each individual. Costs may include sound therapy instruments such as personal sound generators, hearing aids, and/or the Neuromonics Device. Clients should check with their insurance providers to determine whether any portion of the evaluation and/or treatment is covered. Clients are responsible for all services and instrumentation not covered by insurance.

**How long does treatment last?**

Following the initial evaluation, clients are scheduled for additional follow-up office visits at regular intervals depending on the treatment selected. Clients should prepare to commit to TRT for a period of at least one year. On average, patients at UNCG have completed the Neuromonics Tinnitus Treatment in 10 months. However, a maintenance program is recommended to prolong treatment benefits.