Habituation Following Tinnitus Retraining Therapy in Tinnitus Sufferers

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Abstract

Introduction: This study evaluated the efficacy of tinnitus retraining therapy (TRT) in habituating patients with tinnitus. Materials and Methods: This is a retrospective review of patients who underwent TRT in a tertiary referral Otorhinolaryngology unit. Patients were followed up with structured interviews with the aid of questionnaire forms. Habituation following TRT was evaluated. Results: A total of 702 patients were included (55% male, 45% female). Habituation of reaction to tinnitus and habituation of perception were analysed. Average duration of follow up was 33 months. In total, 68% of patients described improvement in annoyance following TRT. Of these patients, 80% of them described habituation of perception as well. There was no statistical difference in gender and age between patients who did and did not respond to TRT. However, duration of treatment was significantly longer in patients who habituated ($P < 0.05$). Patients who adopted treatment strategies recommended based on Jastreboff’s TRT categories were also found to have higher success rates compared to those who refused. Conclusion: The goal of TRT is to achieve habituation of reaction to tinnitus. Habituation of perception is often a secondary result of sufficiently habituated response. From our study, more than two thirds of patients with tinnitus achieved habituation of reaction and of these, the majority also habituated to awareness of the tinnitus.

Key words: Hearing loss, Hyperacusis, Treatment

Commentary

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