

Abstract EFAS/DGA 2007

Our experience with tinnitus workshop

Geczy, B.B., Vatovec, J.

University Department of Otorhinolaryngology and Cervicofacial Surgery Zaloska 2, Clinical Center, Ljubljana

Background: tinnitus is a sensation of hearing in the absence of external sound. Approximately 10 % of adult population experience prolonged tinnitus, although only 1-2 % seeks professional help because of severe annoyance. Two thirds of the population with tinnitus also has hearing impairment. Jastreboff's neurophysiologic model of tinnitus describes that the connections between the auditory pathways and the limbic system define the way how the tinnitus is perceived. The severity of tinnitus depends on the emotional reaction of the patient and not on the loudness of tinnitus. It is measured by tinnitus questionnaires which offer a new approach to the treatment and retraining methods for tinnitus. Our patients learn the bases of the tinnitus retraining therapy on tinnitus workshop conducted by audiologist and psychologist.

The aim of our study was to evaluate the effects of the tinnitus workshop for our patients with severe, annoying tinnitus.

Patients and methods: 40 patients regularly attended the workshops and the authors evaluated the difference in the answers about handicapped daily activities before and after workshops. Tinnitus questionnaire consisting of 10 questions and hospital anxiety and depression scale (HADS) were used.

Results: The improvement of the tinnitus severity after 12 workshops was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: The major risk factors for developing severe tinnitus in the patients who attended our workshops were noise induced stress and anxious-depressive disorders. The results confirm that the most affected are patients with difficulties in coping with stress and that tinnitus workshops can contribute to the treatment of the most handicapped tinnitus patients.

