

# Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

Type	Safety	Efficacy	Recommended?
			
Talking therapy	Regarded as safe	Evidence that it is effective	Yes

## In detail:

<b>Claims for treatment</b>	Changes a person's pattern of behaviour and/or thinking about their tinnitus, which reduces distress and intrusiveness.
<b>What is the treatment?</b>	<p>CBT makes use of a series of techniques such as relaxation, imagery modification and discussion of evidence for and against the beliefs a person holds about their tinnitus.</p> <p>CBT is delivered in individual or group sessions, usually once a week for a period of 8-24 weeks. Treatment may also be delivered online.</p>
<b>What are the downsides of this treatment?</b>	<p>Few adverse effects were reported in CBT clinical trials with people with tinnitus<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Cost (if accessed privately).</p>
<b>Has there been research into this treatment?</b>	There has been a substantial number of papers published on CBT and CBT for tinnitus.

**Tinnitus UK try very hard to make sure our information is right, but this information should not be taken as medical advice. You should always check with your doctor before trying any tinnitus treatment.**

<p><b>What does the research say?</b></p>	<p>CBT may be effective in reducing the impact of tinnitus on quality of life people with the condition<sup>1</sup>. Researchers are confident that CBT for tinnitus is beneficial at least in the short term<sup>1,2</sup>.</p> <p>CBT for tinnitus appears to have some benefit for people who also experience depression<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>CBT for tinnitus delivered in person and delivered online appear similarly effective<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>NICE guidelines recommend that CBT therapies are offered to people with tinnitus if it is still having an impact on their emotional and social wellbeing or day-to-day activities despite having received tinnitus support<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p>A European guideline also strongly supports the use of CBT for tinnitus<sup>4</sup>.</p>
<p><b>How high quality is the research?*</b></p>	<p>A</p>
<p><b>Tinnitus UK's opinion on this treatment:</b></p>	<p>CBT has been shown to be one of the most beneficial treatments available to increase quality of life in people with tinnitus.</p>
<p><b>Would Tinnitus UK support further studies into this treatment?</b></p>	<p>Yes, provided that the study is innovative and of high quality.</p>
<p><b>Comments</b></p>	<p>More studies are necessary to investigate the long-term effects of CBT on tinnitus as there is a lack of six- and 12-month follow-up data in most studies.</p>

\* A = Systematic review/meta analysis. B = Randomised control studies. C = Cohort studies. D = Case control studies. E = case studies/reports. +/- to be used to indicate quality within bands

## For further information

The Tinnitus UK Tinnitus Support Team can answer your questions on any tinnitus related topics:

Telephone **0800 018 0527**  
 Web chat **tinnitus.org.uk**  
 Email **helpline@tinnitus.org.uk**  
 Text/SMS **07537 416841**

We also offer a free tinnitus e-learning programme, Take on Tinnitus at [takeontinnitus.co.uk](https://takeontinnitus.co.uk)

## References

All online references accessed 31 October 2022 unless noted.

1. Fuller T, Cima R, Langguth B, Mazurek

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2. Landry EC, Sandoval XCR, Simeone CN, Tidball G, Lea J, Westerberg BD. Systematic Review and Network Meta-analysis of Cognitive and/or Behavioral Therapies (CBT) for Tinnitus. *Otology and Neurotology*. (2020). Feb;41(2):153-166. doi: 10.1097/MAO.0000000000002472. PMID: 31743297.

3. National Guideline Centre (UK). *Tinnitus: assessment and management*. (2020). Mar. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng155>

4. Cima RFF, Mazurek B, Haider H. et al. A multidisciplinary European guideline for tinnitus: diagnostics, assessment, and treatment. *HNO* 67 (2019). 10–42 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00106-019-0633-7>

## Feedback

We welcome feedback on all our information.

You can pass your comments to our Communications Team by calling us on **0114 250 9933**, emailing [communications@tinnitus.org.uk](mailto:communications@tinnitus.org.uk) or by writing to us at the address below.

## Document information

Author	Nic Wray
Version	2.1
Issue date	October 2022
Review date	October 2025
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