

Antidepressants

Type	Safety	Efficacy	Recommended?
			
Pharmaceutical	Limited potential for harm	Limited evidence that they are effective	Discuss with your GP

In detail:

Claims for treatment	That antidepressants reduces or eliminates the perception of tinnitus.
What is the treatment?	Antidepressants given in pill or capsule form. Little data is available on a recommended dosage.
What are the downsides of this treatment?	Common side effects from clinical trials included: sedation, sexual dysfunction and dry mouth ¹ .
Has there been research into this treatment?	Very few papers have been published, with little new work in the last decade.
What does the research say?	<p>In one small study, the severity of tinnitus decreased by means of subjective and audiometric methods in a group that was taking amitriptyline. The success of treatment was 95%².</p> <p>However, a systematic review concluded that the studies reviewed were not of good enough quality nor long enough duration to be reliable¹.</p> <p>It is unclear It is yet unclear if the potential benefits of antidepressants stem from reducing tinnitus distress or depression; well designed, long studies are necessary¹.</p>

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.

How high quality is the research?*	A
Tinnitus UK's opinion on this treatment:	Antidepressants may be given to reduce depression and anxiety in tinnitus. There are, however, low evidence levels for the prescribing of antidepressants for reducing tinnitus distress. We suggest talking to your doctor about the potential benefits and side effects of antidepressants.
Would Tinnitus UK support further studies into this treatment?	Yes, provided study is of high quality.
Comments	Studies seldom used appropriate outcome measures; studies had high drop-out rates; studies did not differentiate the effects of antidepressants on tinnitus distress and anxiety/depression.

* 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**

References

All online references accessed 18 October 2022 unless noted.

1. Baldo P, Doree C, Molin P, McFerran D, Cecco S. Antidepressants for patients with tinnitus. *Cochrane Database of*

Systematic Reviews (2012), Issue 9. Art. No.: CD003853. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003853.pub3.

2. Bayar N, Boke B, Turan E, Belgin E. Efficacy of amitriptyline in the treatment of subjective tinnitus. *Journal of Otolaryngology* (2001);30(5):300-3.

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** or by writing to us at the address overleaf.

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