

Betahistine

Type	Safety	Efficacy	Recommended?
	2	3	
Pharmaceutical	Limited potential for harm	Evidence that it is not effective	No

In detail:

Claims for treatment	That betahistine reduces or eliminates the perception of tinnitus by increasing the circulation of blood in the inner ear ¹ .
What is the treatment?	Betahistine is given in pill form.
What are the downsides of this treatment?	Some studies suggest that betahistine is generally well tolerated ² but there is some evidence of side effects – generally gastrointestinal upset ¹ .
Has there been research into this treatment?	Yes.
What does the research say?	Studies did not show differences in tinnitus loudness, severity of tinnitus symptoms or side effects between participants receiving betahistine and participants receiving a placebo ¹ . NICE guidelines say do not offer betahistine to treat tinnitus ³ .
How high quality is the research?*	A

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.

Tinnitus UK's opinion on this treatment:	There are other evidence-based treatments for tinnitus, which should be offered where appropriate. No medications have been shown to reliably eliminate or reduce the perception of tinnitus ⁴ .
Would Tinnitus UK support further studies into this treatment?	Yes, if study uses rigorous methodology. Randomisation and blinding should be of the highest quality.
Comments	Betahistine is licensed for the treatment of Ménière's disease, of which tinnitus may be a symptom, but it is not licenced for tinnitus alone ² .

* 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**

2. Wegner I, Hall DA, Smit AL, McFerran D, Stegeman I. Betahistine for tinnitus. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* (2018). Issue 12. Art. No.: CD013093. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013093.pub2.

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

4. Tunkel DE, Bauer CA, Sun GH, et al. Clinical Practice Guideline: Tinnitus. *Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery*. 2014;151(2_suppl): S1-S40. doi:10.1177/0194599814545325

References

All online references accessed 31 October 2022 unless noted.

1. National Guideline Centre (UK). *Tinnitus: assessment and management: Evidence review N: Betahistine* (2020). Mar. www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng155/evidence

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

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communications@tinnitus.org.uk or
by writing to us at the address below.

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