

# FINALLY, A SOLUTION FOR TINNITUS

by Lynn Wagner, MD

If you've ever experienced an unexpected ringing, swooshing, buzzing, or pulsating sensation in your ears when there's no actual sound present, tinnitus could be to blame. This uncomfortable—and often downright annoying—symptom is a signal that something in your auditory system (which includes your outer, inner, and middle ear) is slightly off kilter. Affecting about 15-20 percent

of adults, tinnitus is notoriously hard to treat and sufferers can go years without finding relief.

Enter melatonin. While most people are familiar with melatonin supplements for their ability to support deep, restful sleep, many aren't aware of how far-reaching melatonin's benefits actually are. And when it comes to tinnitus, sufferers everywhere can rejoice: Research shows a nightly dose may be exactly what you need to finally put an end to the irritating ringing or buzzing in your ears.

Melatonin is a hormone naturally produced by the body with high concentrations found in both the pineal gland of the brain and the retina of the eye. Secretion of this important hormone helps to regulate a person's sleep-wake cycle by lowering the body's temperature and causing nighttime drowsiness. For people with tinnitus, it may be that by improving sleep quality, tinnitus symptoms are curtailed.

## The Right Dose

How much melatonin should someone take to curb tinnitus symptoms? In a study conducted at the Ohio State University Eye and Ear Institute, 61 participants took three milligrams of melatonin nightly for 30 days. With that dose, participants reported experiencing a significant decrease in their tinnitus symptoms.

Another study followed 18 adults who had tinnitus for an average of 11 years. These individuals were also given three

milligrams of melatonin nightly for four weeks and reported an improvement in sleep quality and a decrease in tinnitus symptoms. This group was followed for an additional four weeks after the end of the study. The participants reported that they were still sleeping better and experiencing less tinnitus symptoms, which may mean that the supplement had long-lasting effects.

While three milligrams was the dosage studied for tinnitus relief in these studies, higher doses can deliver even more health benefits. In fact, melatonin is known for supporting so many of the body's systems, it's one of the most researched nutrients on the planet.

## Look for Sustained Release

The body metabolizes melatonin quickly, so some supplemental forms can be completely cycled through in as little as two hours. To make sure melatonin is working all night long, look for a sustained-release form. This means the melatonin slowly administers itself into the bloodstream over time, as it breaks down in the digestive tract. This sustained-release form of melatonin is the type used in clinical research because it helps re-establish circadian rhythms more efficiently.

Everyone produces melatonin, but natural production slows significantly with age. Other factors that contribute to lower melatonin production in the body include exposure to artificial lighting, too much screen time, being overweight, and working the night shift. A sustained-release supplement can help to overcome these factors, ensuring healthy levels of melatonin throughout your life. ■



After working in the ER for 10 years, **Lynn Wagner, MD**, noticed a huge gap in healthcare. While understanding the need for Westernized medicine, she knew a pill or procedure wasn't the answer to every

problem. After experiencing the benefits of alternative healing for herself, she wanted to offer the same benefits to her patients.