

# EMDR

(Eye movement desensitisation & reprocessing)

Type	Safety	Efficacy	Recommended?
			
Talking therapy	Regarded as safe	Some evidence that it is effective	Yes, under appropriate medical supervision

## In detail:

<b>Claims for treatment</b>	Reduces or removes the perception of tinnitus and lowers distress.
<b>What is the treatment?</b>	EMDR “is a psychotherapy that involves various elements and attention to the past, present and future. Part of the treatment includes bilateral stimulation, such as rapid movements of the eyes from side to side.” <sup>1</sup>
<b>What are the downsides of this treatment?</b>	No serious adverse effects were reported in clinical trials with tinnitus patients <sup>2 3</sup> .  Cost – most people pay for therapy privately.
<b>Has there been research into this treatment?</b>	Some small scale studies have been conducted into EMDR 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.

<b>What does the research say?</b>	Studies completed to date suggest that EMDR is effective in reducing tinnitus distress <sup>1 2 4</sup> .  However, these trials are small, and no randomisation was applied.
<b>How high quality is the research?*</b>	C/D
<b>Tinnitus UK's opinion on this treatment:</b>	Initial studies are promising. Further randomised controlled trials are necessary.
<b>Would Tinnitus UK support further studies into this treatment?</b>	Yes, if a high quality, large scale study
<b>Comments</b>	More randomised, placebo-controlled, double-blind studies with large sample sizes are needed to confirm the effectiveness of EMDR for tinnitus patients. Uniform, validated, tinnitus-specific questionnaires and measurement scales should be used in future studies.

\* 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](https://tinnitus.org.uk)**  
 Email **[helpline@tinnitus.org.uk](mailto: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 1 November 2022 unless noted.

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3. Luyten TR, Jacquemin L, Van Looveren N, Declau F, Franssen E, Cardon E, De Bodt M, Topsakal V, Van de Heyning P, Van Rompaey V, Gilles A. Bimodal Therapy for Chronic Subjective Tinnitus: A Randomized Controlled Trial of EMDR and TRT Versus CBT and TRT. *Frontiers in Psychology*. (2020) Sep 10;11:2048. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2020.02048.

4. D'Andréa G, Giacchero R, Roger C, Vandersteen C, Guevara N. Evaluation of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing in the management of tinnitus. An observational study. *European Annals of Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Diseases*. (2022) Mar;139(2):65-71. doi: 10.1016/j.anorl.2021.06.002.

## 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.

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