Partial Masking
Overview

• Goals of Treatment
• Parts of the Sound Generator
• Use of the Sound Generator
• Partial Masking
Overall Goals of Treatment

• Counseling
  – Thoughts and Emotions
  – Hearing and Communication
  – Sleep
  – Concentration

• Sound Therapy
  – Decrease the prominence of the tinnitus
  – Facilitate habituation to the tinnitus
  – Habituate to the tinnitus and the sound
Habituation to Sound

New refrigerator is loud at first

After a while it is less noticeable

Not even aware it is present
How Sound Generators Help in the Habituation of Tinnitus

• You hear tinnitus and background sound
• Background sound has no emotional importance
• You habituate to sound plus tinnitus
Parts of the Sound Generator

• Batteries
• Volume control
• Receiver (tiny loudspeaker)
Changing battery

• Change batteries as needed, typically between 1-2 weeks
• Place sticker on your calendar for the date you changed the batteries to estimate the life of your batteries
• Change batteries for both sound generators at the same time
Insertion and removal of the sound generator

• Insertion
  – Identify which ear
    • Red writing- sound generator for right ear
    • Blue writing- sound generator for left ear

• Removal
  – Hold device and slowly pull or twist out

• Take out at night
  – Turn off – open battery door
  – Store out of reach of pets and small children
Cleaning

• When you take sound generator out, wipe with tissue or soft dry cloth
• Daily, brush the sound generator with the port facing downwards
Safety & Protection

• Moisture
  – Don’t wear while around water

• Battery
  – Very harmful if swallowed
  – Keep out of reach of children and pets
Masking versus Partial Masking

Masking

Partial Masking

Tinnitus
Using the sound generator

• Level
  – Lowest level needed to reduce loudness or annoyance of tinnitus
  – Can hear both tinnitus & masker

• Duration
  – Best to put on in morning, take off at bedtime
  – Forget you’re using them
  – Use at least 8 hours a day
Do not change the volume of the device while wearing

• If environmental noise drowns out the sound, do not increase the volume.
• If after wearing the device for awhile your tinnitus becomes louder/softer, do not increase the volume
  – Do the following:
  • Take the device off for about one hour and then put it back on and reset the volume to the lowest level needed to reduce loudness or annoyance.
Summary

• It is possible for you to habituate to any sensory signal, if you do not react with strong negative emotions

• Partial masking of the tinnitus can decrease the prominence of the tinnitus and help you to habituate to the tinnitus
Sound Therapy

• Use sound generators to assist in the habituation of the tinnitus
• Use the lowest level of sound that reduces the loudness or annoyance of tinnitus
• Even when not using wearable sound generators, you can use background sound to help partially mask the tinnitus