

# 4 Types of Tinnitus

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## AccuNotes newsletter result:

Open rate	Click through rate
Patients – 18.36%	Patients – 51.3%
Non-patients – 23.45%	Non-patients – 64.63%

[Tinnitus](#) is a much more common symptom of [hearing loss](#) than people realize, affecting about [one in five people](#), according to the Mayo Clinic. Although it is often thought of in this way, tinnitus is not a condition itself. Rather, it is a response by the auditory system to a potential problem. Simply put, if you're experiencing tinnitus, it is your body's way of announcing another underlying condition. However, tinnitus can be difficult to identify because it is usually a phantom noise - that is, it can only be heard by the person experiencing it. Tinnitus can vary in sound, and is often described as a hissing, ringing, whooshing, clicking or buzzing. Although tinnitus isn't always serious or recurring, in severe cases it can cause difficulty concentrating, fatigue, sleep problems and even lapses in short term memory. Here are four types of tinnitus to be aware of:

*"Subjective tinnitus accounts for 95 percent of all tinnitus cases."*

### 1. Subjective tinnitus

Subjective [tinnitus](#) is the general designation given to sounds that only you can hear. It is the most common form of this symptom, [accounting for 95 percent of cases](#), according to the University of California San Francisco Medical Center. Since this type of tinnitus can only be heard by the patient, the experience is profoundly personal and can affect people differently. Subjective tinnitus is often a sign of potential [hearing loss](#), and those experiencing this symptom should schedule an appointment with their physician.

### 2. Low-frequency noises

Consistently hearing low-frequency noises is one possible form of subjective [tinnitus](#). It may be easy to write off these noises as natural background sounds caused by machinery, appliances or the elements. However, if you're hearing low-frequency noises often, especially in environments that you would expect to be quiet, it may be a sign of tinnitus. If you're unsure, try to identify the external source of the noise.

### **3. Objective tinnitus**

This type of [tinnitus](#) is more rare, but the Mayo Clinic notes that your physician will be able to hear it when he or she examines you. While objective tinnitus only accounts for a small percentage of cases, this type can be a sign of blood vessel or muscular disorders.

### **4. Pulsatile tinnitus**

Pulsatile [tinnitus](#) is a category of objective tinnitus in which rhythmic noises occur in sync with your heart rate. This may be caused by a change in blood flow, which can be caused by a wide range of conditions, such as plaque build-up in an artery. It can also be a sign of [hearing loss](#) or a perforated eardrum, both of which can increase awareness of internal hearing.

If you are concerned about hearing loss, for yourself or someone important to you, [contact an audiologist or a hearing health care professional](#) at your local AccuQuest Hearing Center.

If you want to learn more about how your hearing works, hearing loss and [hearing aids](#), how hearing aids work or why it is a good idea to see an audiologist or hearing health care professional, [click here to view and download your own copy of AccuQuest's Journey to Better Hearing](#).