

## Tinnitus Treatment

### WGN Medical Watch

Dina Bair – Medical Reporter

In tonight's medical watch -- don't say what because one doctor says she knows how to stop the ringing in your ears that limits hearing. It's called tinnitus. And 50 million people have it. Now a way to turn down the annoying sound.

Joel Styzens hopes this music will mark the day the ringing dies. For years the 28 year old has endured noise in his head.

Joel Styzens, tinnitus patient, "I remember it very well. I woke up one morning, it was a Sunday morning and I had very very loud ringing in my head and my ears."

The problem had been building since Joel was a kid with lots of ear infections. Now the damage was devastating.

Joel Styzens, tinnitus patient, "Everything from setting down a glass to turning on the water in the faucet in the bathroom was bothering me, so I was freaking out to put it lightly."

That's because his job was music. He played and he taught. How could he concentrate when another sound was drowning out the beat.

Joel Styzens, tinnitus patient, "I didn't know if I could play drums again or if I could play music for that matter." That is until he started playing this music. Neuromonics.

Dr. Jill Meltzer, audiologist, "We certainly have some data to show that in the long term there have been some actual neuroplastic changes, some rewiring of the brain with some long term benefits."

That's a welcome sound to tinnitus patients. Some whose ears started ringing from exposure to loud noises and others who have hearing loss. In most cases they can't find relief.

Dr. Jill Meltzer, audiologist, "They may go to doctor after doctor, audiologist after audiologist, saying this is making me crazy, you have to help me."

Help is in a pair of headphones. Patients put them on two or three times a day when the ringing is at it's worst. Baroque and contemporary music styles fill their head.

Joel Styzens, tinnitus patient, "I just kind of use it whenever I feel like I need to. It's really good for me even emotionally and psychologically to have something to go to."

Joel has switched to guitar from drums so he doesn't slip back into the tinnitus trap. But says at 28 he's glad he found relief.

While the headphones seem to be successful, this particular treatment does not come cheap. The evaluation costs between \$400 and \$700 and the treatment, which is not covered by insurance, can run up to \$5,000.

For more information on tinnitus or how to get help for your tinnitus/hearing loss contact : Dr Jill Meltzer at North Shore Audio-Vestibular Lab | 160 Park Avenue West, Suite 4 South Highland Park, IL 60035 Phone: 847 432-5555.

If you would like more information on Joel Styzens and his music, email him at : [joel@relax-your-ears.com](mailto:joel@relax-your-ears.com) or visit :

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