
Ayurvedic management of tinnitus (Karna Vata)

What is Tinnitus?

Tinnitus is not an illness but rather a medical symptom whereby the affected person hears sounds (whizzing, buzzing, whistling, ringing, wheezing) not heard by other persons from any identifiable external source. The acoustic sense of sound in tinnitus is actually a disorder of hearing. Medical science does not regard tinnitus to be a disease, but rather a symptom or syndrome resulting from a previous illness or event. The finding of a cause is therefore varied and complex.

Statistical Background of Tinnitus

10% to 20% of the population suffer chronically from tinnitus, while about 40% experience buzzing in the ear at least once in their lifetime. About a third of the aged suffer from ongoing sounds in their ears. According to the specialized press, the number of tinnitus patients in Western industrial countries has increased substantially in recent decades. (Source: Robert Koch-Institut 2006, Tinnitus Liga e.V.)

Causes of Tinnitus

The causes of tinnitus are quite diverse. They include hardened cerumen (earwax), diseases of the middle ear (otitis media), noise events, viral and bacterial infections, diving accidents, autoimmune diseases of the inner ear, acoustic trauma, stress, as well as functional diseases of the vertebral column or improper positioning of the masticatory (chewing) apparatus.

The Causes of Tinnitus from the Standpoint of Ayurveda

Ayurveda views humans and the causes of disease from a holistic perspective. Illness in Ayurveda is regarded as an imbalance in the Dosha System of three bio-energies: Vata, Pitta and Kapha. When these are in balance, an individual is healthy. Various factors can, however, bring the three Doshas out of balance: a false lifestyle, wrong eating habits, qualitatively inferior nutrition, stress, alcohol, smoking, suppressed emotions, inner unrest, a lack of exercise, sleep disorders, and also genetic predispositions.

Tinnitus as a symptom is caused by an excess of Vata, which results from excessive stimuli or stress. This leads to a blockade of the ear canal, to a drying out of tissue, and creates stiffness and muscle hardening in the ear. All microcanals, which are connected with the ears and nerves, are affected. Even the membrane of the ear can become stiff and lose its flexibility. Ayurveda recognizes 28 types of functional disturbances of the ear, for example buzzing in the ear, dryness in the opening to the ear, and pain in the ear.

Ayurvedic Treatment of Tinnitus at the Parkschlösschen

The cause of tinnitus is determined holistically, and the plan of treatment is therefore holistic and individual. Relying on Ayurvedic pulse diagnosis and an intensive initial dialogue with the individual, the Ayurveda physician can recognize the basic disturbance in Vata-Pitta-Kapha balance and can identify the cause of the tinnitus. A special individual treatment plan is drawn up accordingly. The objective of the treatment plan is to release all hardening and blockades in the ear and to eliminate the causes long-term. This also applies to all psycho-vegetative causes. In the case of functional diseases, the corresponding release must first be achieved.

Parkschlösschen has been offering this **newly conceived individual treatment of Ayurvedic management of tinnitus** since March 2010. The treatment includes comprehensive therapies which harmonize Vata, as well as specific treatments for tinnitus such as special ear therapies.

The duration of the entire treatment plan is dependent on the nature and causes of the tinnitus symptoms. A minimal stay of 7 to 10 days is recommended..

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