

Is This Trigger Point Causing Your Tinnitus?

Have you had ringing or buzzing in the ear that hasn't gone away? Have you already seen different doctors, specialists, had different tests done, yet still haven't been able to figure out the ringing in the ear?

There are different causes of tinnitus. If you have already had your inner ear and hearing checked, but have not been able to identify the cause of the tinnitus, try examining your neck musculature, more specifically the Sternocleidomastoid (SCM) and Masseter muscle.

How Do The Scm And Masseter Affect The Ear?

When muscles are tight, over-used, or injured, they can form a local hyper-irritable, painful spot that can also be felt as a knot. This is called a trigger point. These points will cause pain in a specific predictable pattern to other areas of the body.

We have seen multiple cases in our Burnaby physiotherapy clinic that an active trigger point in the sternocleidomastoid can cause pain on the side of the head just behind the ear, around the eye, forehead, and cheekbone. It can also cause pain and ringing in the ear (tinnitus), as well as dizziness or vertigo. An active trigger point in the deep portion of the masseter muscle can also cause pain and tinnitus in the ear.

How Do I Know If I Have A Trigger Point At The Scm And Masseter, And How Do I Get Rid Of It?

Let's do a self-examination. If you have tinnitus on the right ear, turn your head toward the left and bring the head slightly downward. Feel for the big tendinous muscle at the right side of the neck. This is the Sternocleidomastoid.

Take your thumb and two fingers and pinch firmly along the muscle belly starting from the lower part near your collarbone. Slowly pinch and hold, then repeat this held pressure as you move upward toward its attachment on your skull behind the earlobe. As you get closer to the earlobe,