

WHAT IS EAR WAX?

- Wax forms a protective coating of the skin in the ear canal.
- Ear wax is a natural body product which, when soft, will come out of its own accord.
- The amount of wax made by the ears varies greatly from person to person.
- People with narrow ear canals, the elderly and patients who wear hearing aids are more likely to have a build-up of wax.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Your ear can feel full.
- Your hearing may be reduced.

DIAGNOSIS

- A Doctor or Nurse can look inside your ear to confirm the presence of wax.

TREATMENTS

- Olive oil eardrops, available from your pharmacy, should be used to soften ear wax as directed by your doctor. The use of other softening products is not recommended, as these can alter the natural acid balance of the ear canal, which helps to protect against infection.
- If the problem continues, your doctor or nurse may recommend ear irrigation. This is a way of removing wax from the ear using a flow of water
- As with any procedure, there are risks attached to ear irrigation and it can lead to an over production of ear wax.
- Therefore this procedure is only used if necessary and where olive oil drops have been unsuccessful in removing ear wax.

INSTILLATION OF EAR DROPS

- You could ask a friend or family member to help you with this procedure.
- Lie down with the affected ear uppermost.
- Pull the pinna (top of the ear) backwards and upwards.
- Apply approximately 3 drops of wax softener into the ear.
- This should be at room temperature using a dropper (this can be purchased from a chemist). After using the drops, massage gently just in front of the ear.
- Remain in this position for 5-10 minutes allowing the softener to settle. (Do not plug the ear with cotton wool, as this will absorb the softener). Wipe away the excess softener if needed.
- Repeat this procedure for the other ear if necessary.
- The procedure should be repeated twice daily for up to 7 days.

IF YOU HAVE, OR SUSPECT YOU HAVE ANY KIND OF EAR PROBLEM OTHER THAN WAX, YOU SHOULD NOT PUT ANYTHING DOWN YOUR EAR EXCEPT AFTER MEDICAL ADVICE

EAR CARE DO'S AND DON'TS

DON'TS

- Don't push anything into the ear such as cotton buds, hairgrips and matches. These can damage the delicate lining of the ear canal and may damage the ear drum.
- Don't put cotton wool into the ear as this will soak up the softener.
- Don't try to remove wax yourself. This should always be done by a trained person.

DO'S

- Use olive oil ear drops to soften the wax
- Repeat the procedure twice a day to soften the wax.

- Lie down with the affected ear uppermost after the insertion of the wax softener.
- Ask a friend or family member to help you with putting your ear drops in, if you have any difficulty
- Inform your nurse if you have had a perforation of the eardrum, earache or discharge from the ear.
- Keep your ears dry.

Regular use of olive oil 1 drop a week may help to prevent the build-up of excessive wax in the ear

How do I make an appointment to have my ears syringed?

- You must first have been seen by a GP or the Practice Nurse and advised by them to make an appointment to have ear irrigation.
- Please follow any instructions they have given you regarding using ear drops prior to the appointment.

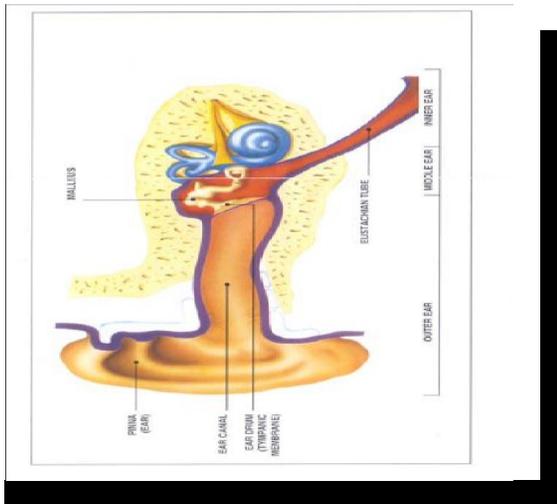
- Book an appointment via the Receptionists who will check with you that you have been referred for this procedure by the GP or Nurse and who will book you an appointment with either Eleanor the Health Care assistant or in her absence a practice nurse.
- The procedure will take approximately 20 minutes.

DANES CAMP SURGERY

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET
Ear Wax: How you can deal with it

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