

EAR WAX BUILD UP

SELF MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

The information in this leaflet is based on
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/earwax-build-up/>
December 2017

Leaflet number: 4617/VER1 (Microsuction)
2018 Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

Rotherham patient leaflet
May 2017



FACT

Ear Wax is normal

protects our ears
from germs and dirt and

enables our ears
to self-clean

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Call 111

if you are unable to speak to your GP
and you don't know what to do next



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 When to speak to your local pharmacist

If you suffer from regular ear infections or earwax build up

They can advise you and suggest treatments

 When to see a nurse at your local GP practice

If after using olive oil drops in your ear, the wax hasn't cleared within 5 days

If your ear is badly blocked and you are unable to hear anything



When to see your local GP or Advanced Practitioner

You are Experiencing **PAIN**

Discharge or bleeding from the ear

Sudden deafness or Dizziness

Foreign bodies (you may be advised to attend A&E)

Ear irrigation

is available to you here and treatment involves your GP:

Flushing the ear wax out with water

Not suitable if you have a hole in your ear drum (perforation)

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Microsuction

is an even more effective removal method and one of the safest methods to remove ear wax

Particularly for people who should not have water in their ears

1

The nurse, doctor or audiologist looks at your ear using a microscope **this magnifies the ear** making it **easier** to assess and treat

2

A gentle suction device is used to clean the ear without using water
It works like a vacuum cleaner can be quite noisy
but is **quick** and **painless**

3

If the object being removed is hard, removal can be slightly uncomfortable
However the person performing the procedure will advise you *if* they feel it is going to be uncomfortable

Microsuction is not available at this practice however you can pay for this treatment privately

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What makes Ear Wax WORSE?

- Hearing aids, ear plugs etc. in your ear can push wax further in
- Age, as wax gets harder, drier and more difficult to fall out
- Dry skin in people who suffer with eczema or psoriasis
- Narrow or hairy ear canals

DO

DO keep ears dry

When washing your hair, showering or swimming, it can help to apply Vaseline around the inner part of your ear

DON'T put your head under water when bathing

DON'T

DON'T use cotton buds, fingers or other implements due to risk of infection or trauma

DO put 2-3 drops of olive oil in your ear twice a day for 3 days if you regularly get blocked ears

Don't use olive oil drops if you have a hole in your eardrum

