

## **WISTARIA & MILFORD SURGERIES**



### **Ear Care**

If there is a build up of wax in your ear(s) please read the following self-help guide as you may not need an appointment.

### **What is ear wax?**

Ear wax is normal and is produced to form a protective coating over the skin in the ear canal. Ears are normally self-cleaning the movement of your jaw whilst eating and talking helps to move the wax along the canal where it will usually fall out naturally without you noticing.

### **Why is my ear blocked with wax?**

The amount of ear wax produced varies from person to person; some people produce excess amounts which can lead to a blockage in the ear canal.

You are more likely to develop a blockage of wax in the canal if you:

- Use cotton ear buds to clean and ear as this pushes the wax deeper into the canal
- Wear a hearing aid, ear plugs or use in-ear speakers for i-pods or similar –as these can all interfere with natural process of wax expulsion
- Have abnormally narrow ear canals
- Have a particularly hairy ear canal
- Are elderly – because the ear wax you produce is drier and harder
- Have a dry skin problem such as eczema or psoriasis

### **Advice to help you manage and prevent ear wax blockage**

Ear wax only becomes a problem if it causes deafness, discomfort or if your Health Professional requires a clear view of your ear drum.

If you experience any of the following, you should seek advice from your GP or Nurse Practitioner.

- \* **Pain**
- \* **Foreign bodies in the ear**
- \* **Discharge or bleeding from the ear**
- \* **Dizziness**
- \* **Sudden deafness or buzzing**

If you are not experiencing any of the above, we recommend that you manage the blockage as following:

### **Olive Oil Drops or Spray ('Earol')**

The following needs to be done 2-3 times daily for 2 weeks to one month

- Lie on your side with the affected ear uppermost
- Pull the outer ear gently backwards and upwards to straighten the ear canal
- Stay lying on your side to allow the oil to soak in for around 10 mins
- Afterwards, wipe away any excess oil but do not plug your ear wax with cotton wool as this simply absorbs the oil

Your hearing problem may initially worsen after first starting to use the olive oil drops: this is why we advise you to concentrate on treating one ear at a time if both ears are blocked with wax.

In most cases after 14 days, the wax will have softened sufficiently to encourage the wax to come out without further intervention.

**Alternatively**, there are now over-the-counter kits available from pharmacies. These contain a wax softener which you use for 3-4 days and a small bulb syringe to enable you to remove the wax from your ear canals yourself. One such kit is called Otex Express Combi pack (cost approx £9.45). The surgery does not endorse any such product.

If your ears are regularly becoming blocked with wax, after clearing the blockage we will usually suggest you use olive oil drops as above around once per week to keep the wax soft and encourage the natural process of wax expulsion.

The following private hearing specialists offer micro suction to help get rid of hard wax, their contact details are as follows. Please call the numbers below for appointments and price details.

<p>Ear Sense Appointments at The Wessex Clinic 21 New Street, Lymington, SO41 9BH</p> <p>Telephone: 07814 822631 Email: <a href="mailto:info@earsense.co.uk">info@earsense.co.uk</a> Website for information: <a href="http://www.earsense.co.uk">www.earsense.co.uk</a></p> <p>Home visits can be made for an additional charge but this fee will not be payable for patients who are housebound, resident in a nursing/care/residential home or are in hospital.</p>	<p>The Private Ear Clinic Milford on Sea War Memorial Hospital</p> <p>Telephone: 07514 417 556 Email: <a href="mailto:info@the-private-ear-clinic.co.uk">info@the-private-ear-clinic.co.uk</a> Website for information: <a href="http://www.the-private-ear-clinic.co.uk">www.the-private-ear-clinic.co.uk</a></p> <p>Opening hours: Tue 8.30am-3pm Fri 8.30am-4pm</p>
<p>Imperial Hearing 45 High Street, Christchurch, BH23 1AS</p> <p>Telephone: 01202 478881 Website for information: <a href="http://www.imperialhearing.com">www.imperialhearing.com</a></p> <p>Opening hours: Mon to Fri, 9am-5pm</p>	<p>DisappEar Wax Phone or use online contacts below to book an appointment for this service which is done in the comfort of your own home.</p> <p>Telephone: 01202 085239 or 07789 823041 Email: <a href="mailto:info@disappearwax.co.uk">info@disappearwax.co.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://Ear wax removal Bournemouth Poole (disappearwax.co.uk)">Ear wax removal Bournemouth Poole (disappearwax.co.uk)</a></p>
<p>Specsavers Lymington Hearing Centre 71 High Street, Lymington SO41 9AL</p> <p>Telephone: 01590 647350 Email: <a href="mailto:customer.lymington.uk@specsavers.com">customer.lymington.uk@specsavers.com</a> Website for information: <a href="http://www.specsavers.co.uk/hearing/ear-health/earwax-removal">www.specsavers.co.uk/hearing/ear-health/earwax-removal</a></p>	