

## **Microsuction**

This leaflet provides information about Microsuction. If you have any questions or concerns, please discuss with a member of surgery staff. This leaflet is not intended to replace your conversation with the practitioner but may highlight points for discussion.

### **What is Ear Wax?**

The primary function of ear wax is to protect the ear. Ear wax assists the self-cleaning mechanism within your ears, trapping dirt and dead skin cells, migrating this out of the ear canal. Ear wax acts as a lubricant preventing the skin lining the ear canals from drying out and cracking. The acidity of ear wax provides anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties.

**Ear wax does not need to be removed regularly to keep the ears healthy.**

Ear wax does not cause problems unless it builds up and blocks the ear canal. A build up of ear wax is not due to poor hygiene.

As your ears are self-cleaning, cotton buds **should never** be used as they force the wax deep into the ear canal and can cause infection.

### **What is Microsuction?**

Microsuction is the removal of wax, debris and foreign bodies from the ear canal. A specially trained practitioner will examine your ear canals using a Microscope and then use a small suction tube and sterile suction tube end to remove the wax and / or debris. This can be noisy and an unusual sensation but should not be painful. If it is uncomfortable, let the practitioner know.

Sometimes, small instruments may be used to break up and remove wax or foreign bodies.

You will be asked to stay as still as possible throughout the procedure. This is important as movement can cause accidental injury to the ear canal or eardrum.

## **What are the Risks and Complications?**

All medical procedures have risks.

- Grazing of the skin within the ear canal may occur, particularly if any sudden movements are made. There is a very small risk of perforation. To avoid this, you should keep as still as possible throughout the procedure.
- Some people experience dizziness due to cool air being sucked through the ear canal. This usually goes away quickly.
- Coughing may occur as the nerve supplying the throat with a coughing reflex lies close to the ear canal.
- If Microsuction is being performed to address infection, it may be uncomfortable. The practitioner will check you are coping with the procedure throughout.

**If you have any concerns, please speak to the practitioner who will be happy to discuss this with you.**

## **What should I Expect?**

- You will be invited in to the Microsuction room and asked some short questions about your ears.
- You will be asked to lie on your back on the examination couch (please let the Practitioner know in advance if you are confined to a wheelchair).
- The procedure time will depend on your particular presentation but may be stopped at any time at your request.

## **Before attending a Microsuction Clinic.**

Please apply Sodium Bicarbonate Drops or Olive Oil Drops to both ear canals twice a day for 7-10 days before your appointment.

If you know you have a perforated eardrum, you may use Sodium Bicarbonate drops but **not Olive Oil Ear Drops.**

## **What happens afterwards?**

- You may find your ears feel a little strange for a day or two.
- Occasionally there may be a small amount of bleeding.
- You may experience short-term dizziness.
- A follow up appointment may be required depending on your circumstances.
- If you have any problems after your Microsuction appointment, please contact your GP Surgery.

