

Children's Ear Nose & Throat Center

Sub-specialists of Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas

A member of the  Seton Healthcare Family

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Cerumen Management

Cerumen or “ear wax” is naturally occurring and its purpose is to clean, protect and lubricate the external auditory canal. Some people have more cerumen than others, but when there is an abundance of cerumen the ear canal can become obstructed and impacted. This blocking of the ear canal can lead to hearing loss, ringing in the ears, fullness, itching, pain, discharge and odor. Cerumen impaction can interfere with diagnostic assessments including eardrum examination and hearing testing.

Tips for Cleaning Ears/Preventing Ear Wax Build Up

- **DO NOT** use Q-tips or any other objects to remove cerumen at home. This can contribute to cerumen impaction or potentially injury the ear canal or ear drum.
- **Hydrogen Peroxide** is a solution that can help clean and migrate cerumen out of the ear canal..
 - Place 2-3 drops into the affected ear canal and let sit for a few minutes. The solution will bubble and fizz. Wick away any peroxide or drainage/wax from the outer ear and canal with a cloth. *Repeat 2-3 x per week as needed.*
*Please note that the bubbling may be loud to your child and can appear uncomfortable, but the peroxide does not burn the ear canal as it does when you are treating a wound.
- **Mineral Oil** can help soften dry or harder wax for easier removal.
 - Place 2-3 drops into the affected ear canal before bedtime 2-3 x per week. This will soften the wax overnight.
 - Wipe away excess wax from the outer ear with cloth.
- **Debrox Earwax Removal Kit** is another option that is available over the counter
 - It is a gentle, non-irritating cleaning solution to help soften and remove the ear wax.
 - Instill 5 drops twice a day for 3-4 days.
 - Wipe away excess wax from the outer ear with cloth. .
- Despite consistent cerumen management at home, some people will need professional ear cleaning as often as every 3-6 months. Managing ear wax at home with the above techniques a few weeks prior to your appointment can help facilitate easier removal of cerumen in the office.

When to contact your Provider

If you have any concerns for ear pain, drainage, or hearing loss, please contact our office.