

AS A LAST RESORT: Ear Syringing

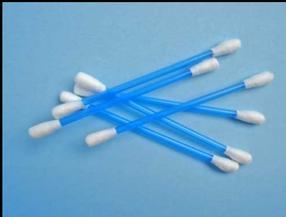
If you have tried the PREVENTION method, the TRADITIONAL method (and bulb syringing if appropriate) and you still have ear wax problems please contact the Surgery to book into the NEW Ear Check clinic.

Clinics are held every Wednesday morning at The Health Centre, BOA and on Tuesday afternoons at St Damian's Surgery, Melksham.

There is usually a few weeks wait for an Ear Check appointment, please use this time to continue with the TRADITIONAL METHOD.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The ear irrigation procedure does carry risks of damaging the ear canal, perforation of the eardrum and ear infections and should only be performed if absolutely necessary



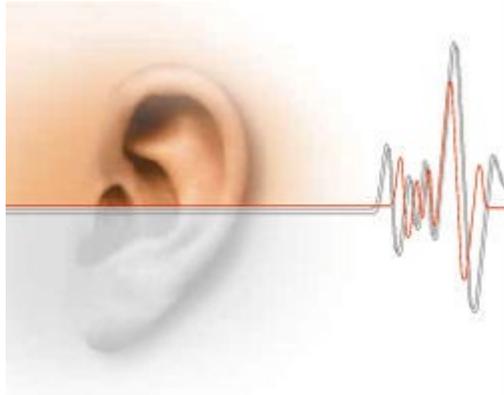
DO NOT try to clean the ears with any small objects such as cotton buds. This causes irritation to the canal producing more wax. It also increases the risks of perforating the eardrum and causing infections.

AUDIOLOGY EAR CHECKS

If you have been invited to attend an audiology appointment, you may be asked to book in for an Ear Check.

This appointment can be booked in any time with a Health Care Assistant.

When booking your appointment, please simply inform the receptionist you have been requested by Audiology to attend



**BRADFORD ON AVON &
MELKSHAM HEALTH
PARTNERSHIP**

Ear Wax

Prevention & Treatment



www.boamhp.co.uk

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EAR WAX What is it?

Earwax is a normal build-up of dead cells, hair, foreign material such as dust and natural wax which forms a protective coating on the skin in the ear canal. The quantity of earwax produced varies greatly from person to person.

A plug of earwax is not a serious problem, more a nuisance. You only need to remove earwax if it is causing symptoms such as dulled hearing or when fitting a hearing aid.

PREVENTION

What can I do to prevent earwax build up



If you are prone to lots of earwax it will help to regularly use ear drops to prevent build up.

There are various options including olive oil, almond oil and sodium bicarbonate drops. These are all found in your local chemist. Evidence shows that these options are equally effective so it's important to find what works for you.

Everyone's ears are different and will need a different frequency but in general to prevent build up of ear wax drops should be applied on a regular basis throughout the year.

TRADITIONAL METHOD Ear drop instructions to remove ear wax

In most cases an intensive period of using ear drops alone will usually clear a plug of earwax. Simply put two or three drops of ordinary olive oil down the ear two or three times a day for 2-3 weeks.

This softens the wax so that it then runs out of the ear on its own accord without harming the ear. Surprisingly, you will not necessarily see wax come out as it often seems to come out unnoticed.

You can continue for any length of time, but three weeks is usually enough.

Directions:

Applying drops two to three times daily for 2-3 weeks for wax removal as follows:

- ◆ Lie down on you side with the affected ear uppermost.
- ◆ Pull the pinna (outer ear) backwards and upwards, drop 2 or 3 drops of oil, at room temperature, into the ear canal and massage the tragus (just in front of the ear).
- ◆ Remain lying down for 10 minutes and then wipe away any excess oil. **DO NOT** leave cotton wool at the entrance to the ear as this will absorb the oil.
- ◆ Repeat the procedure with the opposite ear if necessary.

In most cases the wax will have softened sufficiently to encourage the wax come out without further interventions.

BULB SYRINGING A better alternative to syringing



Bulb syringing is a safe, alternate way to remove wax. **Please see the 'ear wax self treatment, bulb syringing' fact sheet enclosed in this leaflet for more information** and to

see the directions of how to use a bulb syringe.

There are a number of over-the-counter kits available from pharmacies. These contain wax softener drops which you use for 3-4 days and a small bulb syringe to enable you to remove the wax from your ear canal yourself at home.

They can easily be purchased from your pharmacy or online by searching for 'ear bulb syringe'. Examples available are: Aculife bulb ear syringe, Otex combi pack, etc.

The specially designed bulb ear syringes are designed to create enough pressure to clear wax out of the ear without causing damage to the ear drum.

However, bulb syringing **will not** be appropriate for you if your ears are painful or you have fluid coming out of them, or if you have a hole in the ear drum (perforation) or have recently had surgery on your ear. For these occasions, you should follow the Traditional Method to remove ear wax or book an appointment with the Emergency Nurse if you have ear pain or unusual fluid coming out of your ear.