

Ear Syringing / Irrigation

The practice now has increased demand for treatment room appointments. We are, therefore, prioritising urgent procedures such as blood tests, ECGs, and chronic disease monitoring.

We appreciate that ear symptoms can be uncomfortable and irritating. However, ear syringing is not classed as urgent and is not always suitable for patients, particularly those who:

- Have had surgery for some types of ear problems;
- Have recurring infection of the ear canal;
- Have or have had a perforated ear drum;
- Already have deafness in one year;
- Have had a middle ear infection in the last 6 weeks;
- Have tinnitus;
- Experience Dizziness.

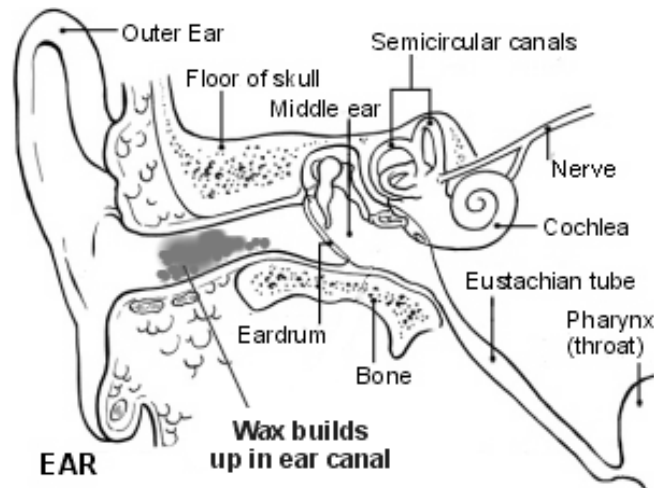
Ear Syringing is an invasive procedure which has the potential to cause tinnitus (permanent ringing in the ears), ear drum perforation or infection and should therefore be avoided whenever possible.

Ear syringing will only be available in future for those patients who require their ears syringed prior to referral to ENT Out-Patient Clinics or in advance of hearing aid appointments.

Ear Wax and Self-Care

Ear wax is produced by glands in the ear canal and provides a waterproof and antiseptic covering for the walls of the canal and also traps dust. Ears are normally self-cleaning and the excess wax is moved along the canal by small hairs at the opening. Wax is then naturally lost without you noticing it. Wax only becomes a problem when it causes deafness.

Excess wax can become a problem for some people because they produce an excess amount of wax or have narrow canals. Wax can become dry and hard in the elderly. Using cotton buds or fingers to remove the wax only worsens the situation as wax is pushed further inside the canal.



Self-Management of excess wax

Do not poke anything in your ears to try to remove wax; you will only push it deeper into the ear canal where it may cause more problems.

Ordinary olive or almond oil can be used with a dropper bottle (available in pharmacies).

- Warm the oil by placing the dropper bottle in a cup of warm water
- Lie on your side and pull the outer ear gently backwards and upwards to straighten the ear canal.
- Put 2 drops of oil into the ear 2-3 times daily and massage the front of the ear gently. Wait for 10 minutes before sitting up.
- Continue for 2-3 weeks when the ears should become clear.
- If you have a recurrent problem with excess wax you may need to do this weekly or monthly.
- If you are still having problems please make an appointment to see a member of our Minor Illness Team.

Other Alternatives

Pharmacy: Speak to a pharmacist about earwax build-up. They can give advice and suggest treatments. They might recommend chemical drops to dissolve the earwax. The earwax should fall out on its own or dissolve after about a week.

Microsuction: This is one of the safest methods to clean the ear. The clinician treating you looks at your ear using a microscope. This magnifies the ear, making it easier to assess and treat. A suction device is used to clean the ear without the use of water. The gentle suction device works in a similar way to a vacuum cleaner and although it can be quite noisy, it is quick and painless. If the object being removed is hard, then removal can be slightly uncomfortable.

This procedure is not available at the Practice, and incurs a charge, but some local providers are as follows:

- <https://www.specsavers.co.uk/search?term=ear+wax>
- <http://clearearclinic.com/oxford-2/>
- <http://www.tripphearing.co.uk/>
- <https://www.jameshearing.co.uk/wax-removal-clinic-oxford>

This list is not exhaustive and not endorsed by the Practice but aims to signpost patients to alternative providers.

More information can be found on the following website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/earwax-build-up/>

Minor Illness Team:

Advanced Nurse Practitioner:
Mary Elliott
Jenni Murray
Nurse Practitioner
Amy Tandy
Emergency Care Practitioner
Hannah Wilkinson
Sarah Bird

PRACTICE INFORMATION

Practice Email address:
churchstreetpractice@nhs.net

Practice Web site:
www.wantagechurchstreet.co.uk

Telephone Number
01235 770245

The Practice is open 8.00 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday except for UK Bank Holidays.

Out of Hours – Emergencies and Advice
111

(An easy number to remember when you need help or advice on any medical problem)

In an Emergency Dial 999

(Revised September 2019)

Church Street Practice

DEALING WITH EAR WAX

Information for Patients

DOCTORS

Dr Joy Arthur
Dr Elizabeth Mackenzie
Dr Matthew Gaw
Dr Vineet Joshi
Dr Elaine Barber

Dr Nicky Jacobsen
Dr Tina Patel
Dr Elizabeth Morris
Dr Helen Dee
Dr Melanie Shaw
Dr Cathy Scott

Please take a leaflet

Cautions: If you have pain, discharge, dizziness, sudden deafness or buzzing, foreign bodies please make an appointment with a member of our minor illness team.

Patients who have eczema or psoriasis or have a history of otitis externa should make a telephone appointment with a member of our Minor Illness Team.