
*Leith Walk
Surgery*

***EAR
CARE***



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A leaflet for patients

DID YOU KNOW.....

Ears are designed to clean themselves.

Wax in ears is normal, although excessive wax can result in hearing problems.

Ears need wax for lubrication and protection. Ear wax is acidic and has bacterial and fungicidal properties. Water left in the ear canal can lead to infection – TRY TO KEEP YOUR EARS DRY.

What can I do if wax builds up?

A plug of wax is not a serious problem, really more of a nuisance.

Do not try to clean the ear canal yourself.

Frequent zealous use of such instruments as cotton buds, rolled towel ends, hair grips etc can make things worse as you will push wax deeper inside.

It may also cause an ear infection...

Let the ear "Clean Itself".

Ear drops alone will often clear a plug of wax.

...in which case syringing may not be required.

If wax is impacted

You should use sodium bicarbonate drops 2 times a day for at least 10 days.

RISKS

Guidelines state that ear syringing should not be carried out routinely, as it can lead to ear damage and infection.

Ear syringing also runs the risk of perforation to the ear drum. Syringing should only be carried out as a last resort if your symptoms have lasted several weeks and are significantly affecting your quality of life.

USING EAR DROPS....

- lie on one side with the affected ear uppermost
- Pull the ear lobe upwards and backwards, and drop 2-3 drops into the ear canal. Massage just in front of the ear after insertion.
- Stay lying down on your side for 5 minutes
- Sit up and wipe away any excess – **DO NOT PUT COTTON WOOL AT THE EAR ENTRANCE**

Never use cotton buds to clean your ears as they tend to push wax further into the ear canal.

We recommend that if you are prone to accumulation of ear wax, you should put 1 – 2 drops of (olive oil or almond oil) into the affected ears on a weekly basis.

Using ear drops on a weekly basis will keep ear wax soft, allowing it to expel itself more easily, and prevent the need for syringing.