

Ear syringing is normally painless and involves lukewarm water being squirted into the ear canal to dislodge the plug of wax, which then falls out with the water.

Occasionally some Patients experience:

- Dizziness after syringing, but this usually settles quickly.
- Inflammation in the ear canal, which can cause itching or discomfort. This can be treated with ear drops.
- On rare occasion ear syringing can cause serious damage to the ear or ear drum.

### Ear may NOT be syringed if you have experienced:

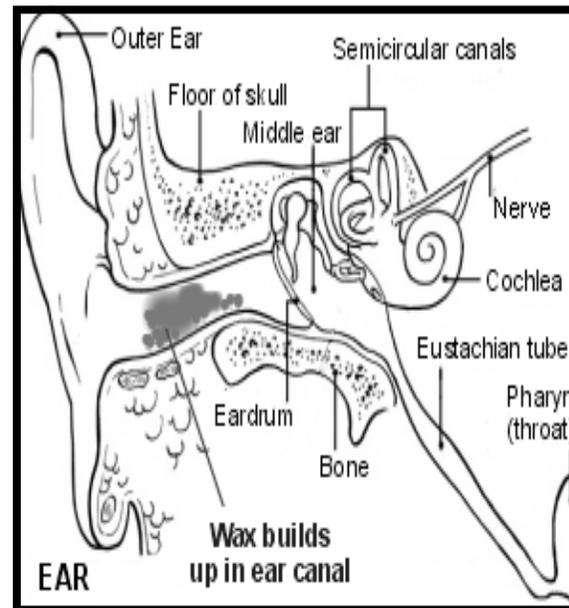
- A past history of ear surgery.
- Perforation.
- Recurring ear infections.
- Deafness in the other ear.

### After Ear Syringing

- Always dry your ears.
- Apply a few drops of olive oil on a weekly basis to help prevent wax plugs reforming.
- **Never use cotton buds in your ears!**

### DO NOT FORGET.....

- It is not advisable to leave cotton wool in your ears unless a dressing has been inserted by a Nurse.
- If you have drops prescribed by your Doctor or Nurse, always complete the course of treatment.



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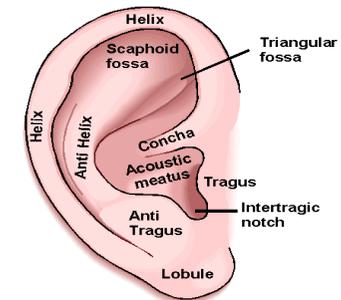
Www.cumberlandhousesurgery.nhs.uk



## CUMBERLAND HOUSE

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### PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE



## General Ear Care Advice

## What is ear wax?

Ear wax forms a protective coating of the skin in the ear canal. Small amounts are made all of the time, flakes of wax break off and fall out of the ear from time to time.

The quantity of ear wax made varies from person to person. Plugs of wax form in some people, this may cause a feeling of fullness and dulled hearing.

A doctor or nurse can look into the ear canal and confirm a plug of wax has formed. A plug of wax is not a serious problem, more of a nuisance. You only need to remove wax if it is causing symptoms such as dulled hearing, itch, or discomfort.

## What do I do if wax builds up and causes a problem?

Olive oil encourages the natural movement of wax from the outer ear. It is advisable to buy a bottle of oil and a 'dropper' from your local Pharmacist. Use the drops as per the instructions/your Nurse.

Most patients find that applying 1-2 drops at night, for 7 nights prior to an appointment is helpful for wax removal. If you have continued problems with excessive wax, it may be beneficial to use 1-2 drops of olive oil each week. This will not stop wax collecting, but will make removal easier.

1. Lie down on your side with the affected ear upwards.
2. Gently pull the outer ear backwards and upwards. Using room temperature olive oil and the 'dropper' drop 1-2 drops in the ear canal and gently massage the area in front of the ear.



3. Remain lying down for 10 minutes and then wipe away any excess oil. DO NOT put cotton wool in your ear canal as this will absorb the oil.
4. Repeat the procedure with the opposite ear if necessary.

### REMEMBER:

**Never use cotton buds in your ears!**

### USING DROPS PRESCRIBED BY THE DOCTOR OR NURSE

- Follow the instructions as for olive oil ear drops.
- You will need to use the drops more frequently than the olive oil drops. Please follow the instructions on the bottle.
- Make sure you complete the course of treatment.

### FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD A MASTOID OPERATION

**These Instructions can be used for any ear drops.**

- Put the drops in as previously directed.
- To ensure that the drops reach the back of the mastoid cavity, lie on your back and insert 2-3 drops into the back of the cavity (see diagram below).



- Remain in this position for 10 minutes and then wipe away any excess fluid (oil or antibiotic drops).
- **Never use cotton buds in your ears.**

## Ear Syringing

This may be necessary if ear drops do not work. Syringing will usually clean the wax away, but only if it has been softened first. Therefore, please remember to use ear drops to soften the wax 2-3 times a day, for 7 days prior to your syringing appointment unless instructed otherwise.