

## How to use ear drops

### When to use

- after swimming or showering to prevent an ear infection
- occasional use to prevent ear wax accumulation
- to treat a discharge from the ear when someone has a ventilation tube in the ear drum
- to treat a painful ear canal because of infection of the skin of the ear canal (swimmer's ear)
- to treat a plugged ear due to ear wax
- to treat a dry itchy ear caused by a mild dermatitis of the canal skin

### Clean the ear

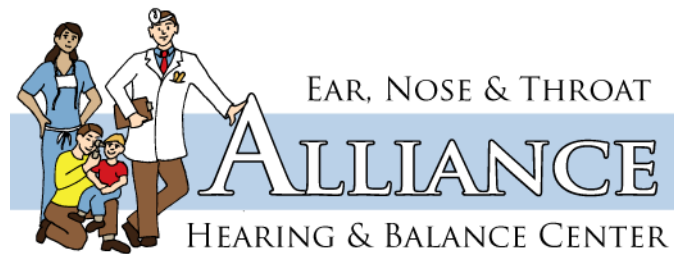
If there has been a discharge from the ear, it is to clean the outer ear and canal with a dry tissue or Q-tip. Try not to worry about blood coming from the ear because this is common when a person with ventilation tubes has an ear infection. If the discharge or blood on the outside of the ear is dried, try cleaning with warm hydrogen peroxide. **In general, keep water from an infected ear.**

### Applying the ear drops

- Warm the bottle of ear drops in your hand
- Lie patient down. Turn the infected ear up
- Gently pull back the edge of the ear
- Drop the prescribed number of drops of medicine into the ear canal. Follow the instructions on the package
- Depress the cartilage at the front of the ear canal several times to mix the medicine
- The medicine will work better the longer that it stays in the ear canal. **Try to keep the patient should stay in this position for 5-10 MINUTES.** This is not easy with young children. Try to read to your child or find them some entertainment. If this does not work, try giving the drops when your child is asleep.
- When finished, place cotton or tissue in the outer ear. This will absorb extra fluid when standing up or turning over.
- If the other ear needs to be treated, turn the head to the opposite side and repeat the steps
- If the medicine is causing pain or other complaints, turn the head over to allow the fluid to run out. Stop using the medicine and call our office for advice.

### **KEEP WATER FROM THE EAR!**

While being treated for an ear infection, no swimming at all until the ear has not drained any fluid for one week. While being treated, baths are safer than showers. When washing hair, either block the outer ear with an ear plug, cotton with Vaseline, or fold over upper ear.



## EAR PLUGS

Ear plugs are *essential* only for those with ventilation tubes who swim a lot or are diving under the water more than 6 inches. But we still recommend ear plugs to avoid ear pain and infection.

- silicone plugs - available in pharmacy
- custom-fitted ear plug - available in our office– priced below \$50 and often covered by your insurance. Customized ear plugs are better because they stay in place and will float if one falls out. Call for an appointment to make your earplug.
- Ear-Bandit or swimming cap. Our office recommends using a neoprene headband to hold the ear plugs in place when swimming. Ear-Bandits are available in a pharmacy