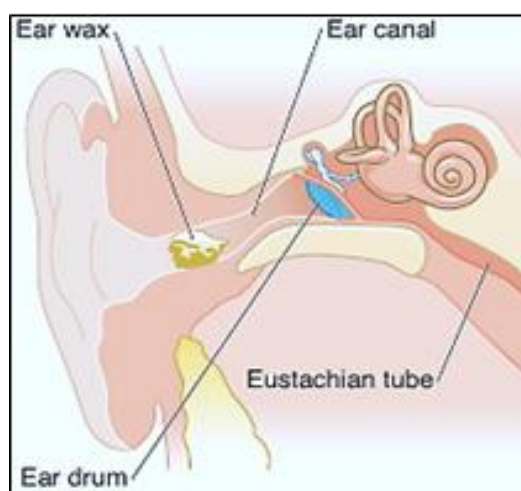


Patient Information Factsheet

For parents of children and young people requiring removal of ear wax

Department of Paediatric Audiology

Wax is a normal substance that helps to keep the ears clean and healthy. Most of us have some wax in the ear canals which usually works itself out of the ear but, on occasions, the presence of ear wax can be problematic, particularly with the use of a hearing aid. Sometimes the consultant or audiologist may advise the removal of wax to improve the level of hearing, to allow for impressions to be taken for ear moulds or to allow for a clearer view of the ear.



Never poke anything into the ear canals - we strongly advise NOT TO USE cotton buds.

Never insert anything into your child's ears to remove wax (particularly cotton buds) as this can:

- Cause the wax to be impacted by pushing it further into the ear
- Damage the wall of the ear canal and cause inflammation
- Perforate (tear) the eardrum

Before your appointment for wax removal

Prior to the wax removal appointment, the consultant or audiologist will advise the use of olive oil for 7 days, or sometimes longer, to soften the wax. This makes it easier for the wax to be removed. We advise that you only use ear drops that the consultant or audiologist has recommended.

Wax removal methods

- **Wax hook or curette:** The consultant or audiologist may use a wax hook or a curette (a scoop-shaped surgical instrument) to scoop and remove the wax.



- **Micro-suction:** The consultant or audiologist may decide to clear the wax using micro-suction. This procedure is only carried out at Lister Hospital or New QEII Hospital due to equipment availability. Micro-suction removes the wax via suction with a small probe, much like a vacuum cleaner. This procedure is quick, effective and painless, but can be fairly noisy. Micro-suction is generally performed on children over the age of 5 years as the child is required to remain still.



If you require any further information, please contact the Paediatric Audiology department on 07917 837248 or email: audiology.enh-tr@nhs.net

