

EAR WAX

People have a build-up of ear wax for many reasons;

- you may have hairy or narrow ear canals,
- you may use a hearing aid, ear plugs or cotton buds that push the wax back into the ear,
- it could be your age, because as we get older the wax becomes harder and plugs the ear,
- or it could just be that you naturally produce a lot of wax.

IF YOU HAVE A PERFORATED EAR DRUM DO NOT USE EAR DROPS, PLEASE SEE THE NURSE OR GP

Ear wax will normally fall out on its own, but if it becomes stubborn then you can use olive or almond oil as first choice ear wax softening drop. Instil two or three drops twice a day for 14 days. If that is not effective, the next treatment is to use Waxol which can be purchased from your pharmacy, and which you can use for 7 days. The wax should fall out when you lie down, especially at night. If the wax is still causing problems after that, speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend chemical drops that dissolve the wax. There are a number of private health care providers who can remove earwax, and can also offer microsuction to the ears.

Consult your GP if:

You have followed all of these steps and your ear hasn't cleared within 7 to 14 days.

Your ear is completely blocked, you can't hear anything and it is getting painful, itchy or you are feeling dizzy - this may be a sign of an infection.

There is no clinical evidence that candles, vacuums or probes work to clear ear wax.

If after the wax has fallen out the symptoms do not improve dramatically, please consult your doctor.