

The Lakes Medical Practice

Ear care advice

If any of the following applies please speak to the practice nurse for personalised ear care advice:

- Recent history of perforation
- Recent earache or infection
- Untoward experiences in the past
- Grommets in place
- Mastoid cavity

We are keen to provide a safe and efficient service for you and as such have recently reviewed our ear care policy.

The ear canal is lined by skin which grows sideways and migrates along the ear canal eventually dropping out of the ear over about two weeks. This process keeps the ear clean by carrying away any debris or wax as it migrates along the canal so there is no need to clean ear's generally.

If you have a wax problem causing deafness and you know your ear is healthy you can start treatment yourself. We recommend you use olive oil as this tends not to irritate ears as some other drops can sometimes cause a problem as they contain chemical additives to which skin may be sensitive especially if you have eczema or dermatitis.

Again, providing your ear is healthy you may also start treatment using a bulb syringe which can be purchased at pharmacies or online. A study compared 200+ patients who either used eardrops and bulb syringe with instructions or conventional ear irrigation. The study showed improved symptoms and no evidence of harm. 75% of patients using the ear bulb would do so again.

Our policy is that:

1. If wax is not a problem leave it alone
2. Start with ear drops; we suggest olive oil 2-3 times a day for 2 weeks.
3. If the problem persists use the ear bulb.
4. If your problem persists after using the above methods we will offer a review appointment.

If you tend to get a regular build-up of wax it can sometimes be useful to use ear drops twice a week to try and prevent this.

If you have or suspect any kind of ear problem other than wax do not put anything in the ear except after medical advice.