

## **Bicester Health Centre no longer offers routine ear syringing services**

Regrettably, but in common with the other practices in the area, due to the high and increasing demands on general practice, we no longer have capacity to provide this service. We have asked OCCG to support us by commissioning this service from practices but they have declined to do so. In addition, there is not good evidence for the benefit of ear syringing (wax serves a protective function in preventing infection in the ear canal) and there is a small risk of harm (damage to the ear canal and even perforation of the ear drum).

If you still wish to have your ear wax removed, then the options available are:

### **Self-Treatment**

### **NHS Referrals**

Referral to Ear Clinic at John Radcliffe (waiting time is approximately 12-16 weeks)

Please book a routine appointment with a practice Health Care Assistant who can check your ears for wax and then will arrange for your GP to do the referral.

### **Local Private Services**

These are local providers we have found listed on public directories. Their inclusion here is not an endorsement by the practice. Other providers may also be available.

All Clear Ears  
Back in Line Complementary Therapy Centre  
The Corner House  
Victoria Road  
Bicester OX26 6PB  
Tel: 07881 060793

The Banbury Hearing Centre  
36 High Street  
Banbury OX16 5ER  
Tel: 01295 268333

James Hearing Ltd  
Room 215, John Eccles House  
Robert Robinson Avenue  
Oxford Science Park  
Oxford  
OX4 4GP  
Tel: 0845 680 1227

Keith Donaghy  
White Lion Walk,  
Banbury OX16 5UD  
Tel: 01295 255131

Keith Donaghy  
14 Langdale Gate  
Witney OX28 6EY  
Tel: 01993 709955

The Oxford Hearing Centre  
157 Eynsham Road  
Botley  
Oxford OX2 9NE  
Tel: 01865 861861

Tripp Hearing  
62 Church Road  
Wheatley  
Oxford OX33 1YA

Tel: 01865 671500

# Ear Wax Removal

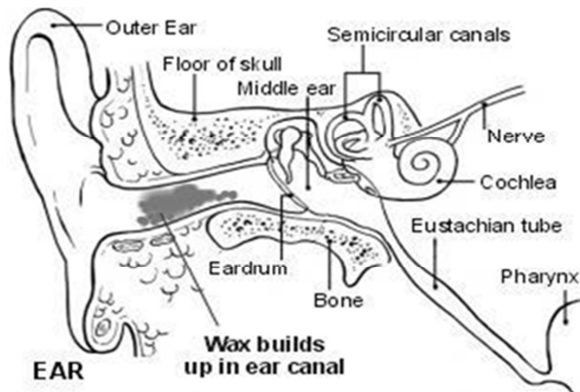


## Self-Help advice and Directory of local providers for routine ear wax removal

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## SELF TREATMENT OF EAR WAX BUILD UP

A build-up of earwax can cause dulled hearing and sometimes other symptoms. Earwax can usually be easily removed.



Earwax is a build-up of dead cells, hair, foreign material such as dust, and cerumen. Cerumen is the natural wax produced by glands in the ear. It forms a protective coating of the skin in the ear canal. Small amounts are made all the time. Flakes or crusts of earwax break off and fall out of the ear from time to time.

The quantity of earwax made varies greatly from person to person. Some people form plugs of earwax in their ear canal. This may cause a feeling of fullness and dulled hearing. It can feel uncomfortable. A hard plug of earwax can also sometimes cause 'ringing in the ear' (tinnitus) or even a mild type of dizziness (vertigo).

A plug of earwax is not a serious problem, more a nuisance. You only need to remove earwax if it is causing symptoms such as dulled hearing. Earwax may also need to be removed for fitting

of a hearing aid, or if a doctor or nurse needs to examine your eardrum.

Note: do not try to clean the ear canal with cotton wool buds, etc. This can make things worse, as you will push some earwax deeper inside. It may also cause an ear infection. So, let the ear clean itself.

What can I do if earwax builds up and causes symptoms?

### EAR DROPS

Ear drops alone will often clear a plug of earwax. You can buy drops from pharmacies. For example, olive oil, almond oil, sodium bicarbonate and sodium chloride ear drops are commonly used for this purpose. Warm the drops to room temperature before using them. (Let the bottle stand in the room for about half an hour.) Pour a few drops into the affected ear. Lie with the affected ear uppermost when putting in drops. Stay like this for 2-3 minutes to allow the drops to soak into the earwax. The earwax is softened and it often breaks up if you put drops in 2-3 times a day for 3-5 days. Flakes or crusts of earwax often fall out bit by bit. You may not notice the wax as it comes out of your ear.



### CAN I PREVENT A BUILD-UP OF EAR WAX?

Some people are troubled by repeated build-up of earwax. In this situation, to prevent earwax building up and forming a plug, some doctors recommend using ear drops regularly - for example, olive oil ear drops. You may also consider buying a bulb syringe which can be used at home to perform your own irrigation.

However, there is no clear research evidence to guide on this issue. For example, it is not clear how often the drops should be used. Different doctors advise different things - from daily, to once a fortnight. It is also not clear if regular use of ear drops does actually prevent earwax from building up. However, if you are troubled by regular plugs of earwax, you may wish to try using ear drops on a regular basis to see if this prevents the problem.

### FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD A MASTOID OPERATION

These Instructions Can Be Used For Any Ear Drops

The drops have to reach two areas – the ear canal and the mastoid cavity.

1. Put the drops in as previously explained.
2. 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.

