

Otitis Externa is inflammation or irritation of the skin of the outer ear canal; it is caused by problems such as:

- Eczema/dry skin.
- Bacterial or rarely fungal infections
- Scratches or breaks in the skin.

## Symptoms

Otitis Externa causes:

- Pain in the ear
- Itching in the ear
- Discharge from the ear/crusting of the ear
- Impaired hearing due to blockage of the ear canal.

## Treatment

The ear will be examined and gently cleaned of debris and a course of ear drops will be prescribed. These contain antibiotics and a mild steroid to soothe the irritation in the ear canal.

If the ear canal is very narrow, you may not be able to get the drops in, if this is the case a small pope wick dressing or ribbon gauze will be inserted into the ear for a few days.

If the dressing falls out, please do not be alarmed. If you are due to be seen within 24 hours, you do not need to do anything. If you are to be seen in couple of days time, please ring ENT outpatients on 01234 355122 ext. 4204 for advice.

**DO NOT ATTEMPT OT REINSERT THE DRESSING YOURSELF.**

You must keep water out the ear if you have otitis externa. You must also refrain from using cotton buds in your ears as they will make the infection worse. It is impossible to clean your ears with cotton buds.

## Further advice

If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact ENT outpatients on 01234 355122 ext. 4204 for advice

# ENT

## Otitis Externa



An information leaflet for patients.

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