

## Ear Drops

The name of your medicine is \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

Some ear drops are used in the ear to treat infection. Others decrease the pain, swelling, and redness of the infection. Some ear drops are used to help soften ear wax so it can be removed more easily.

### What do I need to know before using ear drops?

Ear drops may be absorbed into your body. Let your provider and pharmacist know if you:

- Have any allergies to prescription or over the counter OTC medicines,
- Are taking any prescription or OTC medicines including ear drops,
- Have any medical problems,
- Are pregnant or planning to become pregnant while using this medicine,
- Are breastfeeding.

### How do I use ear drops?

Use this medicine in your ear as prescribed. The bottle may not be full. This makes it easier to give the correct number of drops. Once you open the bottle keep the tip from touching anything including your ear. Check with your provider before using leftover ear drops for future ear problems.

Ear drops may feel cold. You may warm the drops by holding the bottle in your hand for a few minutes before using. If the drops get too warm they may not work as well.

### Steps

1. Wash hands before and after using ear drops.
2. Lie down or tilt your head sideways so that the ear into which the medicine is to be placed faces up.
3. Straighten the ear canal. Gently pull the earlobe up and back. If you are giving drops to a child gently pull the earlobe down and back. Drop the prescribed number of drops into the ear canal.
4. Keep the ear facing up for a few minutes to allow drops to get into the bottom of the ear canal. You may put a clean, soft cotton plug into the ear opening to prevent the drops from leaking out.
5. Wipe the tip of the dropper with a clean tissue and keep the bottle tightly closed.

If you are using drops for an ear infection use them for the number of days prescribed. Even if the symptoms are better this helps to clear the infection.

### How do I use ear drops to help remove ear wax?

Flush your ear with warm water after you have used the drops for 2 or 3 days. If you have any questions about how to flush your ear with water check with your doctor.

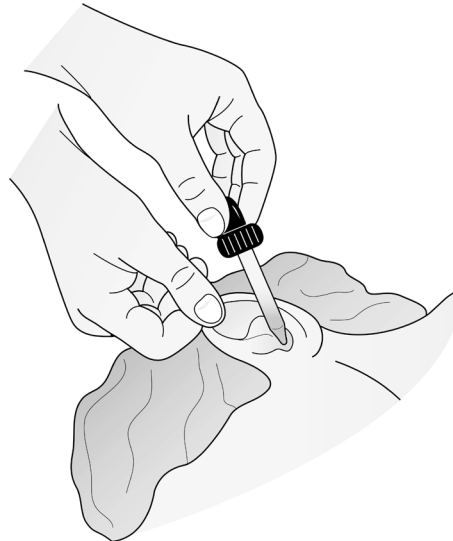
**Do not use ear drops to remove wax if:**

- You have an active ear infection,
- An open middle ear space due to previous surgery,
- Perforated ear drum or ear tubes.

If you miss a dose of drops, give it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and give the next dose at the normal time.

**When to Call**

- If you have questions about how to flush your ear with water,
- If you have these side effects
  - Ringing in your ears,
  - Dizziness,
  - Itching,
  - Burning, redness or skin rash,
  - Swelling.

**How to straighten the ear canal when giving ear drops.**

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©5/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4698.