

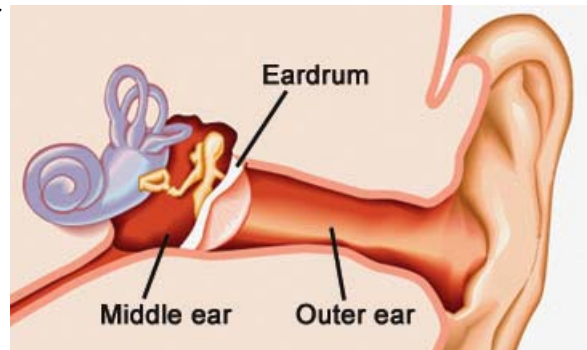
Discharge Instructions

FLUID IN THE MIDDLE EAR

[Child, Serous Otitis]

Earaches can happen without an infection. This can occur when air and fluid build up behind the eardrum causing pain and reduced hearing. This is called "Serous Otitis Media". It means "fluid in the middle ear". It can happen when you have a cold if congestion blocks the passage that drains the middle ear ("Eustachian Tube"). It may also occur with nasal allergies, gastric acid reflux (GERD) or after a bacterial middle ear infection.

Adenoid glands are located in the back of the throat near the opening of the Eustachian Tube. They commonly swell in children and can block the Eustachian Tube.



The pain may come and go. You may hear clicking or popping sounds when chewing or swallowing.

It often takes from several weeks up to three months for the fluid to clear on its own. Oral pain relievers and ear drops help with pain. Decongestants and antihistamines can be tried but their effect is not always helpful. This condition does not respond to antibiotics since there is no infection.

If there has been no improvement after three months, surgery may be used to drain the fluid and insert a small tube in the eardrum to permit continued drainage.

Because the middle ear fluid can become infected, it is important to watch for signs of an ear infection (see warning signs below), which may develop later.

HOME CARE:

- 1) **FLUIDS:** For infants under 1 year old, continue regular formula or breast feedings. If there is a fever, give plain water or Oral Rehydration Solution between feedings. (You can buy this as Pedialyte, Infalyte or Rehydralyte from grocery and drug stores. No prescription required.). For children over 1 year old, give plenty of fluids like water, juice, 7-Up, ginger-ale, lemonade, Kool-aid or popsicles.
- 2) **EATING:** If your child doesn't want to eat solid foods, it's okay for a few days, as long as she/he drinks lots of fluid.
- 3) **PAIN or FEVER CONTROL:** Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever, fussiness or discomfort. In infants over six months of age, you may use ibuprofen (Children's Motrin) instead of Tylenol. **[NOTE:** If your child has chronic liver or kidney disease or ever had a stomach ulcer or GI bleeding, talk with your doctor before using these medicines.] (Aspirin should never be used in anyone under 18 years of age who is ill with a fever. It may cause severe liver damage.)
- 4) **EAR DROPS:** Pain relieving ear drops may be prescribed. Use as directed. If you were not given a prescription for these ear drops, and if ibuprofen alone is not controlling pain, contact your doctor.

FOLLOW UP with your doctor or as advised if your child is not feeling better after three days.

Discharge Instructions (con't)

RETURN PROMPTLY or contact your doctor if any of the following occur:

- Ear pain gets worse or does not start to improve after three days of treatment
- Fever over 100.0° F (37.8° C) oral, or over 101.0° F (38.3° C) rectal for more than three days
- Unusual fussiness, drowsiness or confusion
- No wet diapers for 8 hours, no tears when crying or dry mouth
- Headache, neck pain or stiff neck
- New rash appears
- Frequent diarrhea or vomiting
- Fluid or bloody drainage from the ear
- Convulsion (seizure)