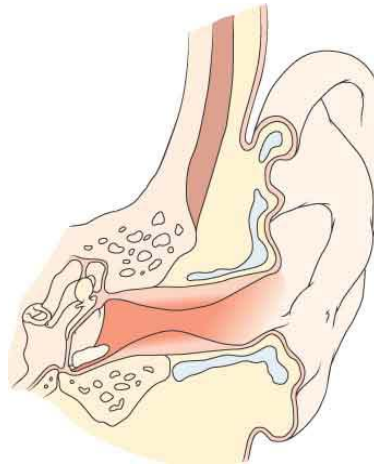


Otitis Externa Connecticut Pediatric Otolaryngology

What is Otitis Externa?

Otitis externa is an infection and inflammation of the outer ear (ear canal). It can range from being merely itchy to severely painful. It is also known as **Swimmer's Ear**.



How does it occur:

- Sometimes trauma to the ear canal can lead to infection
 - Q-tip use
 - Bobby pins or similar instruments used to scratch ear canal
- Often occurs with increased heat and moisture
- Frequent water exposure, like swimming
- Ear wax is protective; if removed, it may lead to higher chance of an otitis externa

Symptoms:

One sided ear pain & pain with movement of the ear

Itching

Stiffness

Smelly discharge or drainage

Treatment:

If experiencing drainage, the ear canal should be suctioned under a microscope by an ENT clinician. This allows the debris and infection which is filling the ear canal to be removed. The clinician will then look at the eardrum under the microscope.

Sometimes a middle ear infection may be present as well.

Then eardrops will be placed. The ear drops often contain an antibiotic (to fight infection) and steroids (to decrease inflammation). If the skin of the ear canal is very swollen, a tiny sponge, called a wick, will be placed to allow the drops to get down to the ear drum. Your child will be placed on ear drops for a set amount of time.

Sometimes more than one treatment under the microscope is needed to completely get rid of the infection. It is important to keep the ear dry during treatment.