

Ear Infection

The most common types of ear infection are otitis media and otitis externa, also called “swimmer’s ear.”

Otitis media is an infection behind the ear drum. Babies, small children, and adults who smoke are more likely to get this type of ear infection. Common symptoms are fever, cough, sore throat, poor appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, pain in ears, or pus draining from the ears. Babies and children may be irritable and may pull at their ears.

Swimmer’s ear (otitis externa) is a skin infection in the ear canal leading to the ear drum. It is called swimmer’s ear because the infection often occurs when there is too much moisture in the ear canal. Swimmer’s ear can cause pain, itching, draining, and trouble hearing.

What to do:

1. Take all your medicine as directed.
2. Babies, children, and young adults may take Tylenol for pain. Adults may take Tylenol or other pain relievers.
3. Use a hot water bottle or warm cloth over the ear to help relieve pain.
4. Be sure to come back for your next appointment so the doctor can make sure the infection is gone.
5. To keep swimmer’s ear from coming back, wear earplugs if you swim often.
6. You can use drying drops after swimming to help remove any water.

Do NOT clean your ears with Q-tips, bobby pins, or other objects.

Do NOT use other medicines in your ears unless your doctor tells you to.

Do NOT let water get in the ear until the doctor says you can.