

Aintree
Head & Neck
Practice
Development
Unit

How to Use Olive Oil Ear Drops

NHS

Aintree University Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

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Why do I need to use olive oil ear drops?

- Wax formation is normal and serves to protect the delicate lining of our ear canals.
- The ear canals have a self cleaning mechanism and wax usually works its way out naturally.
- Some people produce excessive wax giving rise to problems such as itching discomfort and even temporary deafness.

In this instance it is advisable to use olive oil drops to soften the wax aiding its clearance from the outer ear.

- A bottle of olive oil and a dropper can be purchased from your local chemist. Always follow the advice given to you by your nurse on how to use the oil.
- Most patients find instilling 5 drops of olive oil 5 days before your appointment beneficial.
- In the event of a persistent build up of wax a more continuous approach is required, 1-2 drops once or twice weekly.

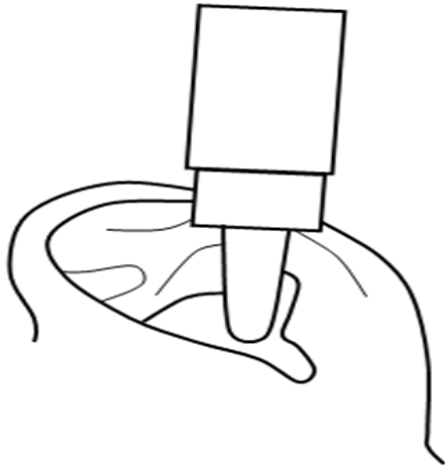
This will not stop the wax collecting but should make it easier to remove.

How should I insert the ear drops?

- Wash your hands thoroughly.



- Lie on your side with the ear to be treated uppermost.
- Gently pull the ear upwards and outwards. Ideally a second person should do this.
- Using olive oil (at room temperature) and dropper, instil the amount as directed into the ear canal, then massage the area in front of your ear.



- Remain lying down for 5 minutes then get up and wipe away the excess oil. Do not put cotton wool into your ear as this will only absorb the oil and reduce its effect.
- Repeat the same procedure to the opposite ear if needed.

For people who have had mastoid surgery:

The olive oil needs to reach two sites, the ear canal and the mastoid cavity.

- Put the drops in as previously explained.
- To ensure the olive oil reaches the mastoid cavity you now need to lie on your back and instil the advised amount.
- Remain in this position for 5 minutes then get up and wipe away the excess oil.

There is a very small chance of adverse reaction (itchiness, swelling or a rash), in this instance stop using the drops and seek medical advice.

Further Information

Aintree ENT Outpatients Department
Elective Care Centre

Tel: 0151 529 0358 / 0151 529 0357

Ward 28:- 0151 529 5239

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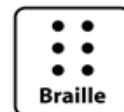
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